DAVID BORING

"EIGHTBALL"

BY DANIEL CLOWES · NUMBER TWENTY-ONE

FOUR NINETY-FIVE IN THE USA · SEVEN FIFTY IN CANADA

NOT SUITABLE FOR CHILDREN

FBI
FANTAGRAPHICS

"CRIME AND JUDY"

DAVID BORING · DOT PAAR

JUDY LOWENSTEIN
FERDINAND KARKES

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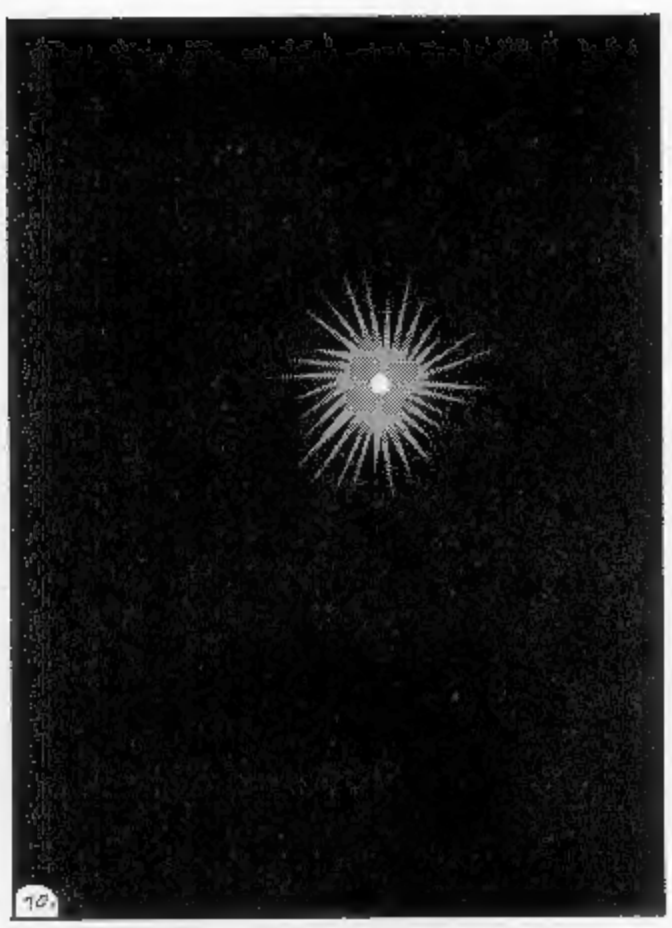
DANIEL CLOWES PRESENTS

DAVID D



I TOLD YOU ALL THAT CRAP ABOUT THE END OF THE WORLD WAS HORSESHIT!

WHERE ARE WE?

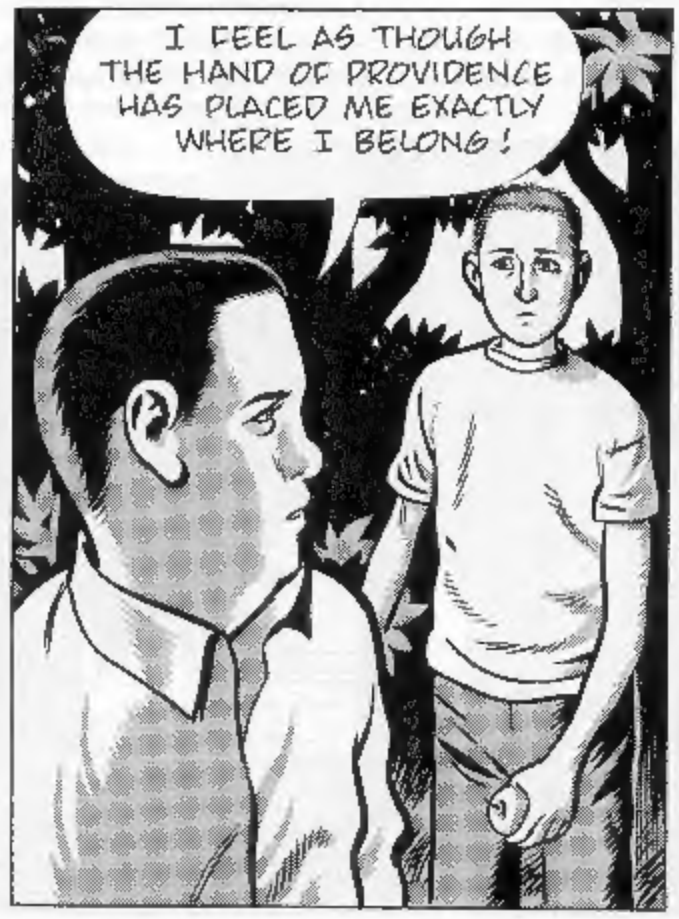
IN THE HOME OF OUR RESCUERS, IN SOUTHERN NEW LAPLAND COUNTY.
HELLO, DAVID.

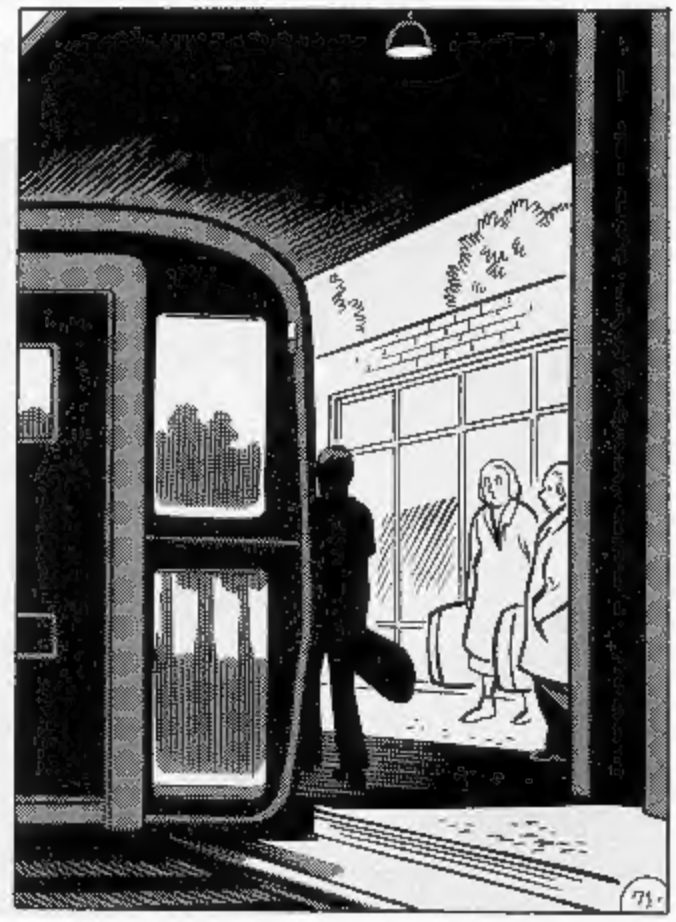
IT WAS ALL OVER IN A DAY, SHE SAYS. OUR BOYS TOOK CARE OF THEM BEFORE THEY HAD A CHANCE TO DO MUCH DAMAGE... YOUR UNCLE GOT US ALL WORKED UP OVER NOTHING!
IT WASN'T NOTHING! I'VE NEVER BEEN SO SCARED!

IT'S JUST THE BEGINNING. THEY'LL KILL US ALL BEFORE THEY'RE DONE.

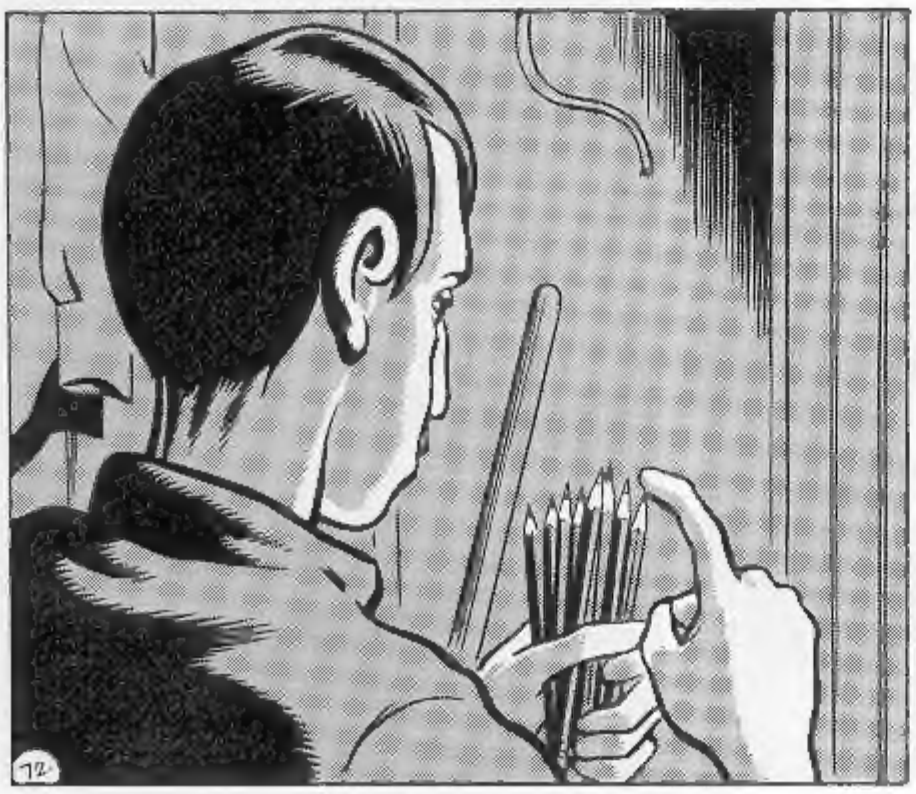
BORING

NO, NO... THANKS FOR YOUR OFFER, DAVID, BUT I'M STAYING ON...


I FEEL AS THOUGH THE HAND OF PROVIDENCE HAS PLACED ME EXACTLY WHERE I BELONG!



MY JOB IS (PERIPHERALLY) IN THE FILM BUSINESS, AND I ONLY HAVE TO GO TO THE OFFICE 2 OR 3 DAYS A WEEK. I'M TRYING TO WORK ON MY OWN LITTLE PROJECT IN MY SPARE TIME.



I HAVEN'T SPOKEN TO MY MOM. DOT AND IRIS LIVE TOGETHER ABOUT 60 MILES WEST OF HERE. AND YES, I DID TRY TO FIND WANDA, BUT I GAVE UP AFTER A MONTH OR SO.

I'VE BEEN LIVING WITH NAOMI SINCE MARCH. SHE'S HAD A VERY POSITIVE INFLUENCE ON ME. I'M A VEGETARIAN NOW. MORE AND MORE, I CAN'T STAND TO HURT ANY LIVING CREATURE. I'M TOO FEARFUL OF REVENGE.

I ACTUALLY DON'T THINK ABOUT WANDA THAT MUCH AT ALL ANYMORE. I'M TRYING TO GET AWAY FROM THAT SORT OF SHALLOW BEHAVIOR.

I'VE DECIDED TO WRITE A SCREENPLAY. I NEED TO DO SOMETHING TO VALIDATE MY EXISTENCE.

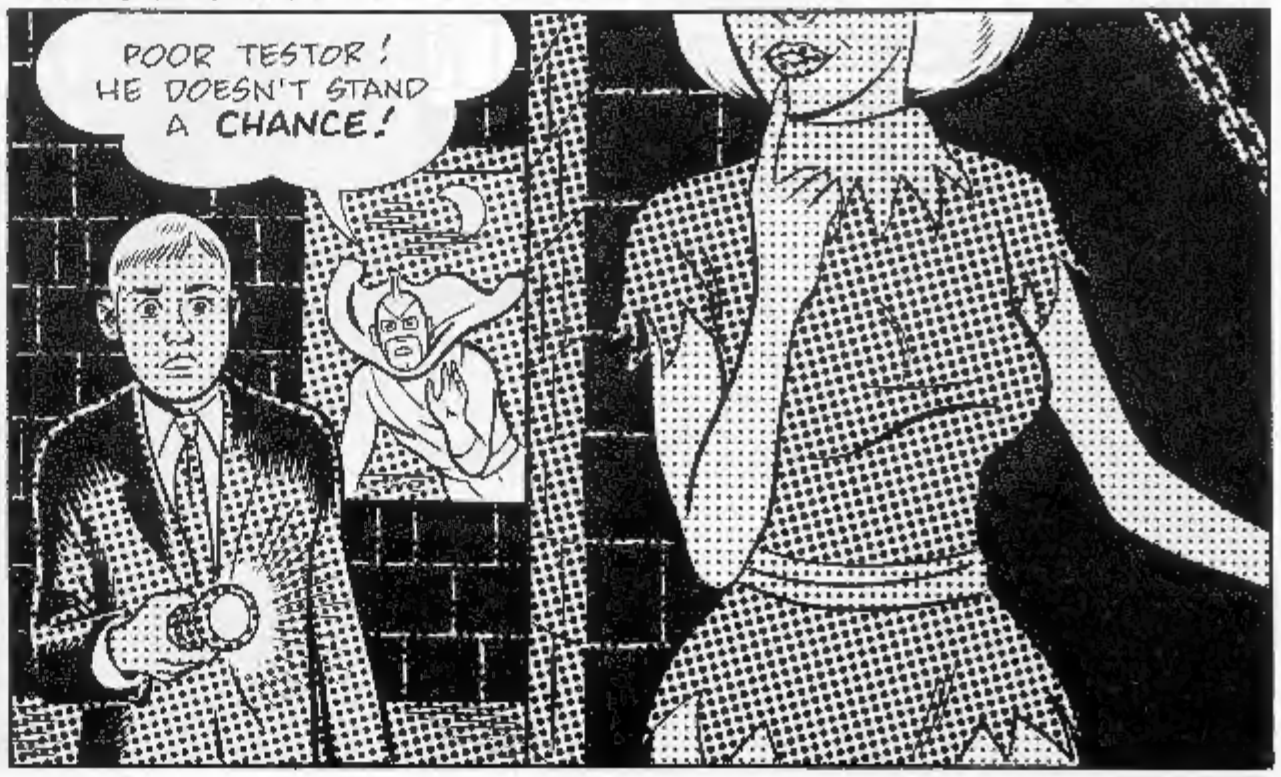
I INTEND TO FOLLOW ALL THE "RULES" OF SCREENWRITING (3-ACT STRUCTURE, ETC.). THERE'S NO POINT IN WRITING IT IF NO ONE WILL EVER SEE IT.

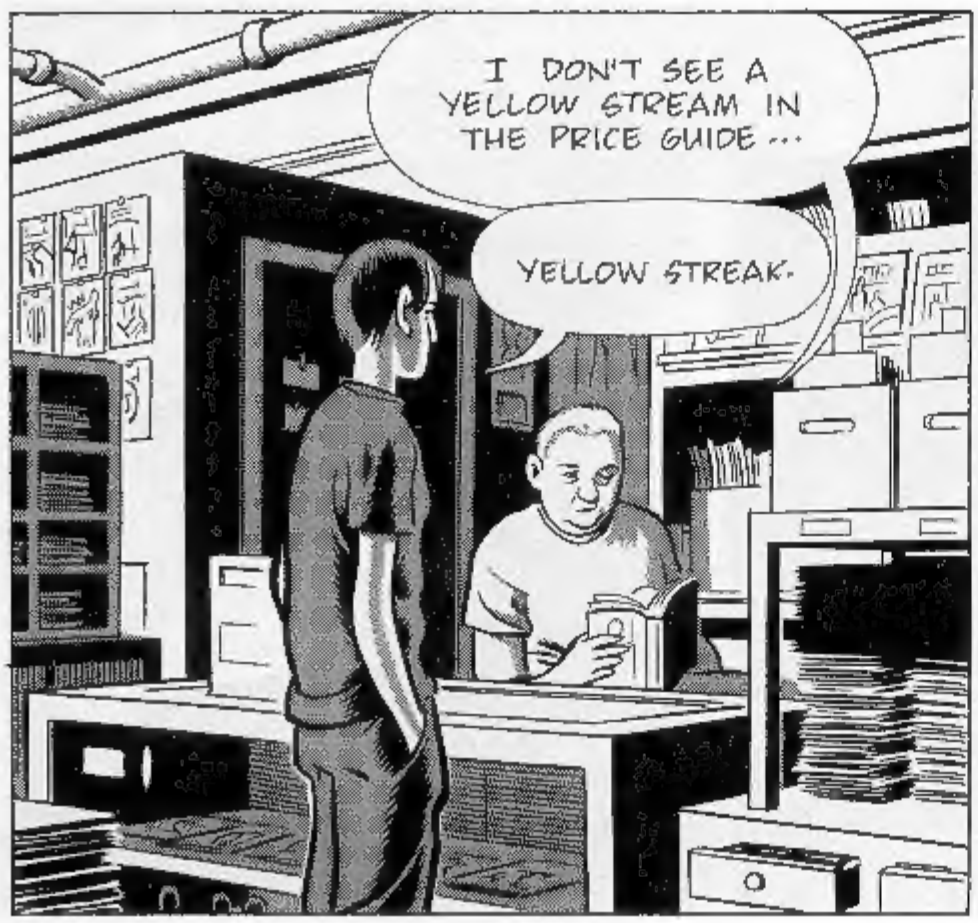
TO MAKE A MOVIE IS, FOR BETTER OR WORSE, TO ENTER AND PARTICIPATE IN THE SHAPING OF THE GENERAL UNCONSCIOUS...

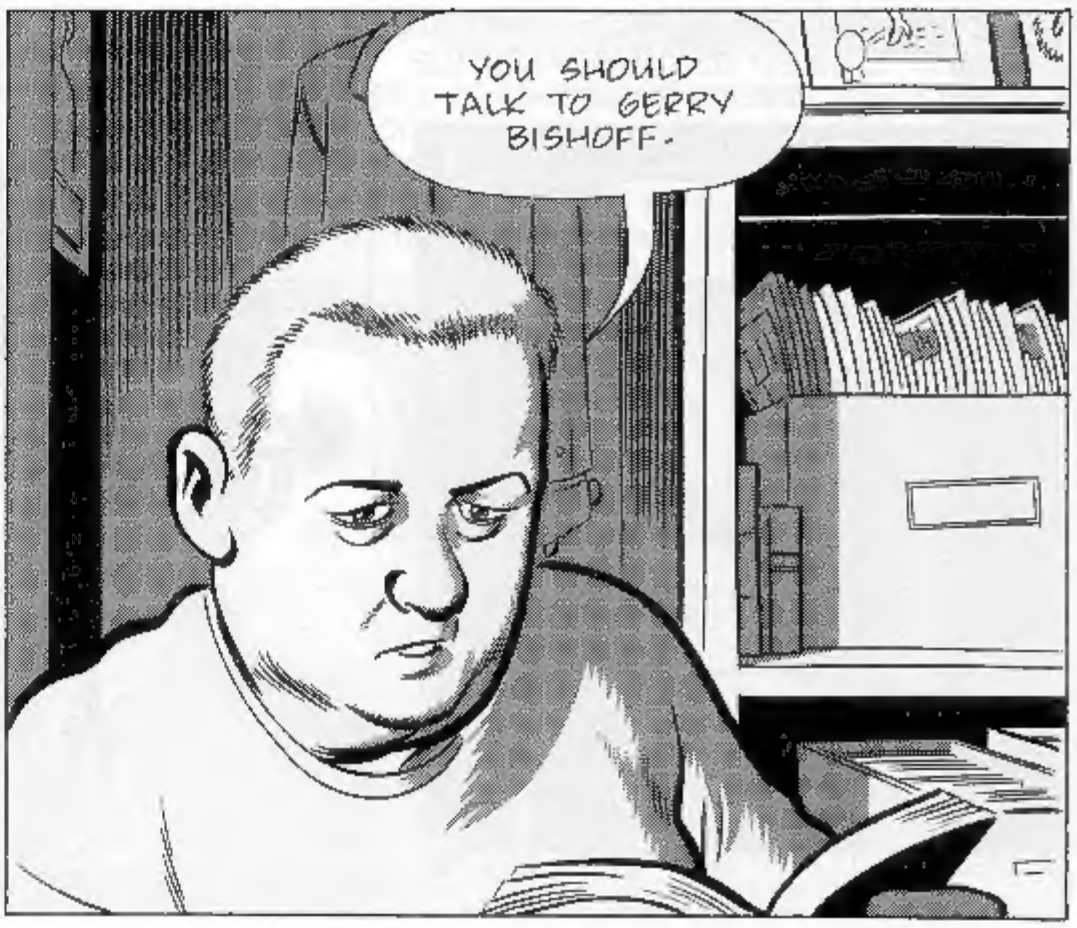
THE YELLOW STREAK ANNUAL HAS AT THIS POINT BEEN REDUCED TO AN ENVELOPE OF DISEMBODIED FRAMES: 9 OR 10 WATERLOGGED SURVIVORS...

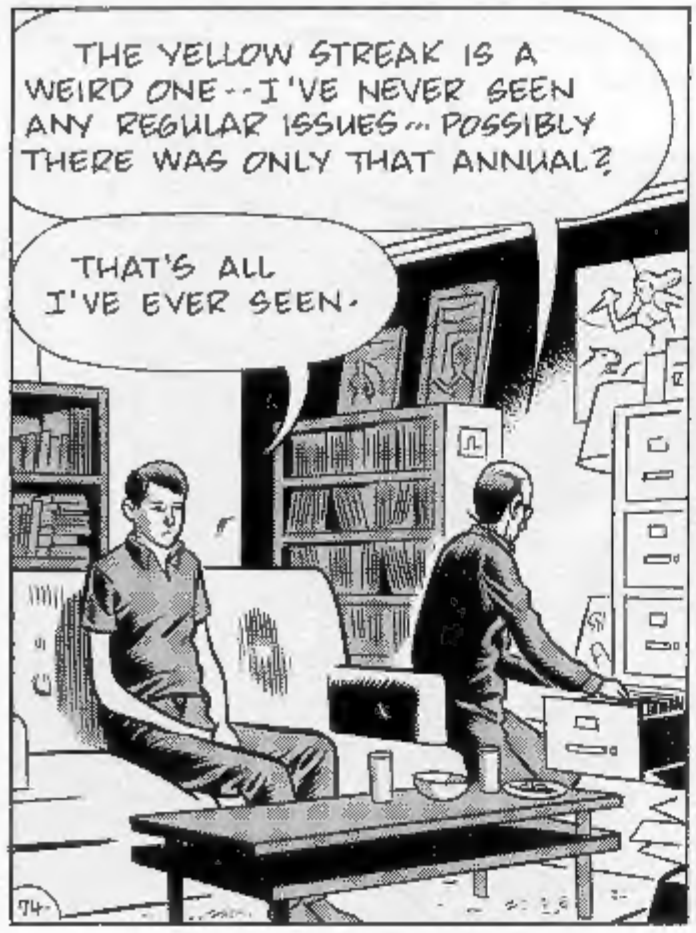
I DON'T REALLY CARE ABOUT WHAT HAPPENED TO MY DAD (HE REALLY IS DEAD, BY THE WAY -- I CHECKED), BUT I CAN'T SHAKE MY FASCINATION WITH THE YELLOW STREAK.

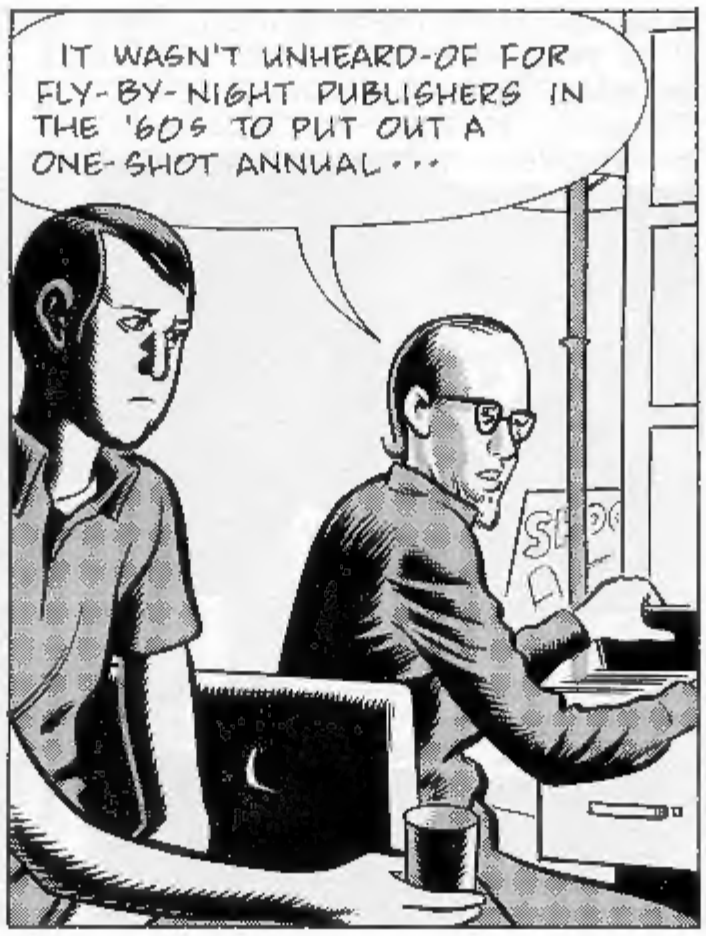
WHAT ARE THE YELLOW STREAK'S POWERS? HOW DOES HE KNOW TESTOR? IS FLORENCE REALLY THE HAG IN DISGUISE? WHAT OTHER ADVENTURES HAVE THEY HAD? WHAT DO THEY DO BETWEEN PANELS? WHERE ARE THEY NOW?

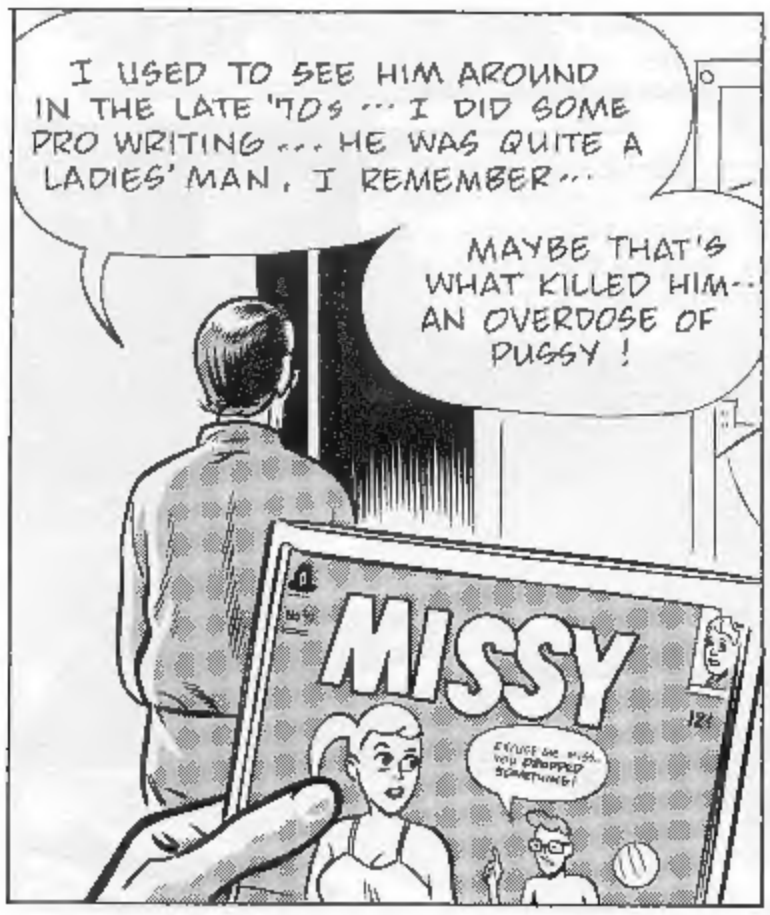


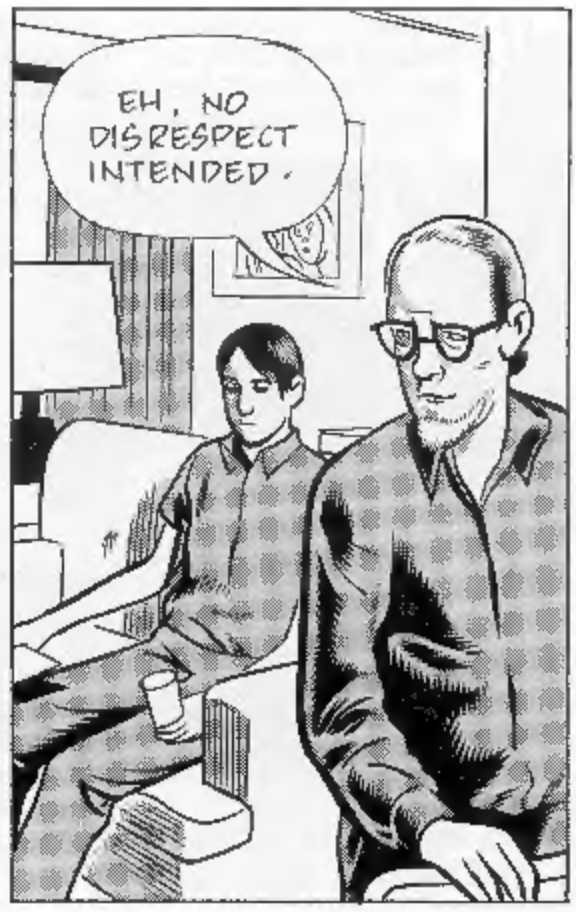






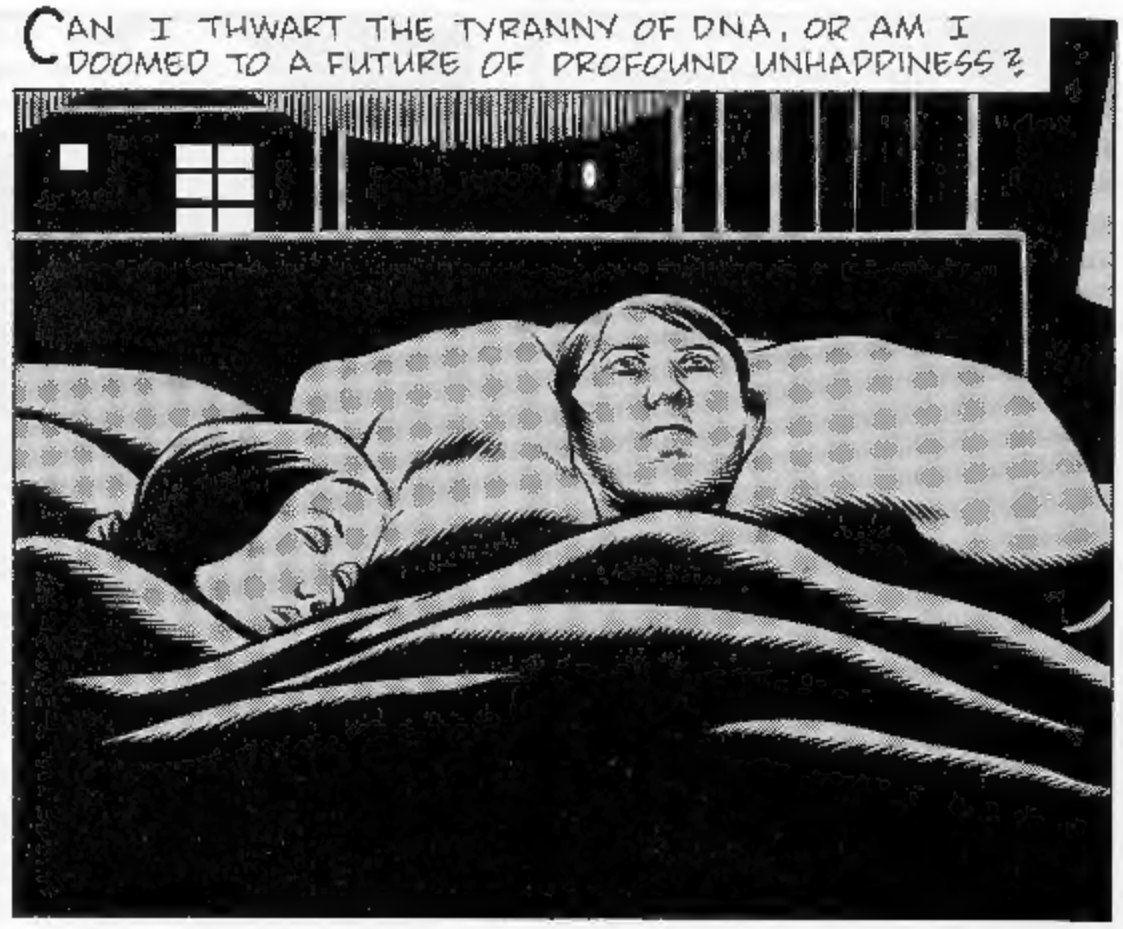



I USED TO SEE HIM AROUND IN THE LATE '70s ... I DID SOME PRO WRITING ... HE WAS QUITE A LADIES' MAN, I REMEMBER...
MAYBE THAT'S WHAT KILLED HIM.. AN OVERDOSE OF PUSSY!
MISSY


EH, NO DISRESPECT INTENDED.

THAT'S OKAY, I DIDN'T KNOW HIM VERY WELL.
HE STRUCK ME AS A PROFOUNDLY UNHAPPY MAN.

TAP
TAP
TAP

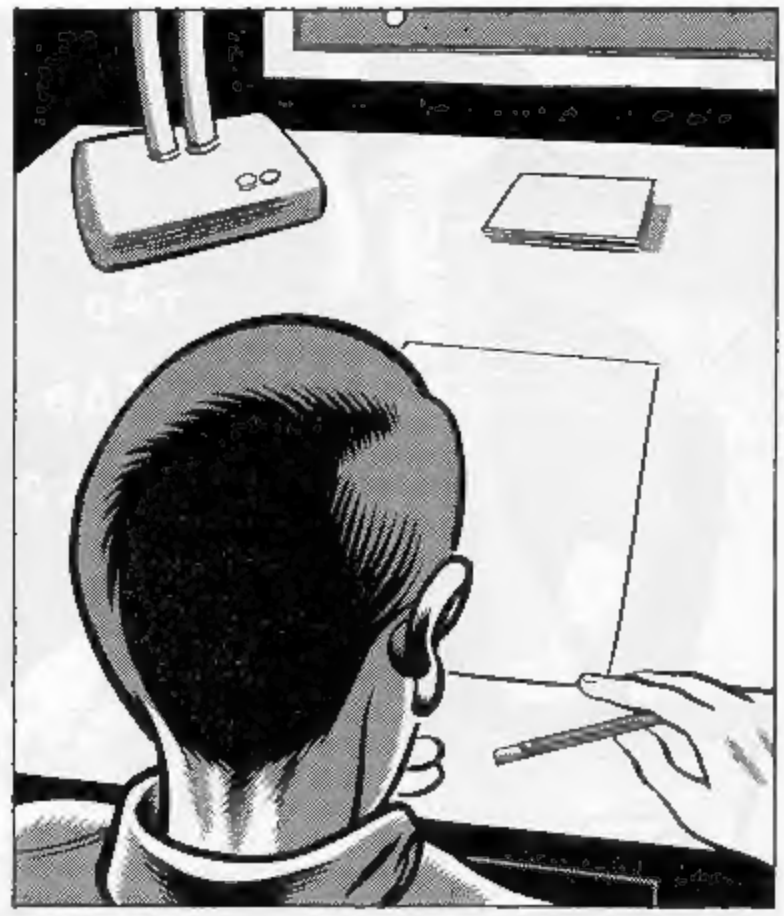

CAN I THWART THE TYRANNY OF DNA, OR AM I DOOMED TO A FUTURE OF PROFOUND UNHAPPINESS?

THANK GOD FOR WOMEN LIKE NAOMI. EVERYTHING IS OKAY. I'M BETTER THAN MY FATHER. MOVIES ARE BETTER THAN COMICS. TOMORROW, I WILL BEGIN TO WRITE.
DON'T YOU LOVE IT HERE, DAVID?
IT'S PERFECT, BUT..
WHAT?

THE "EERIE BOY," AS I CALL HIM, HAS BEEN APPEARING MORE AND MORE FREQUENTLY IN MY DREAMS. I'M TEMPTED TO DISMISS HIM AS A MANIFESTATION OF MY MALIGNANT ADOLESCENT IMPULSES, BUT THAT SEEMS A BIT SIMPLISTIC...
DO YOU HAVE ANY SECRET SEXUAL FANTASIES?
NO.

NO? ARE YOU SURE?
NO... I MEAN, EVERYTHING'S FINE.
I'D TELL YOU IF I DID.

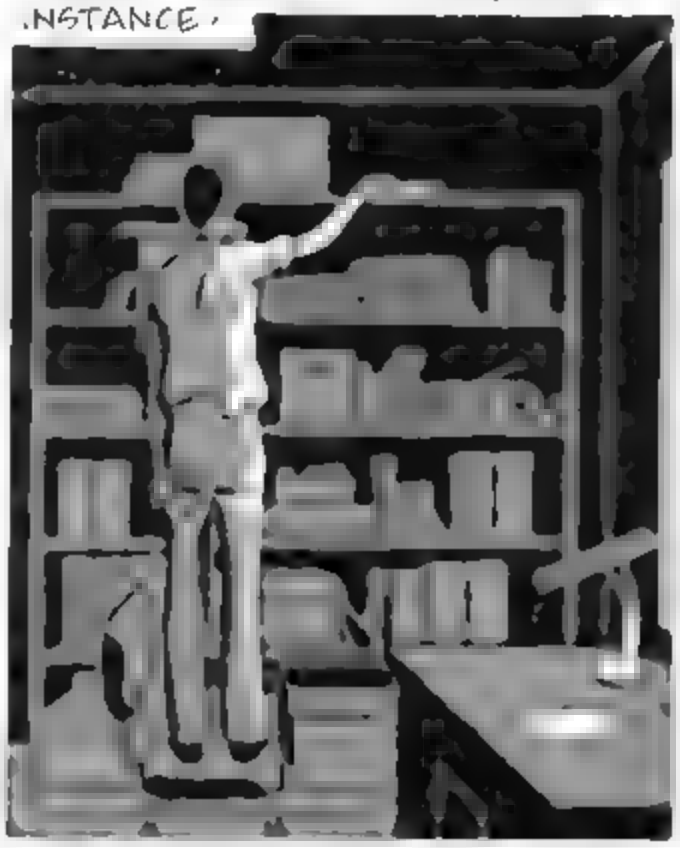
DO YOU?
I JUST WANT TO MAKE YOU HAPPY.



I DON'T WANT THE WORLD TO END, DAVID.
IT WON'T.

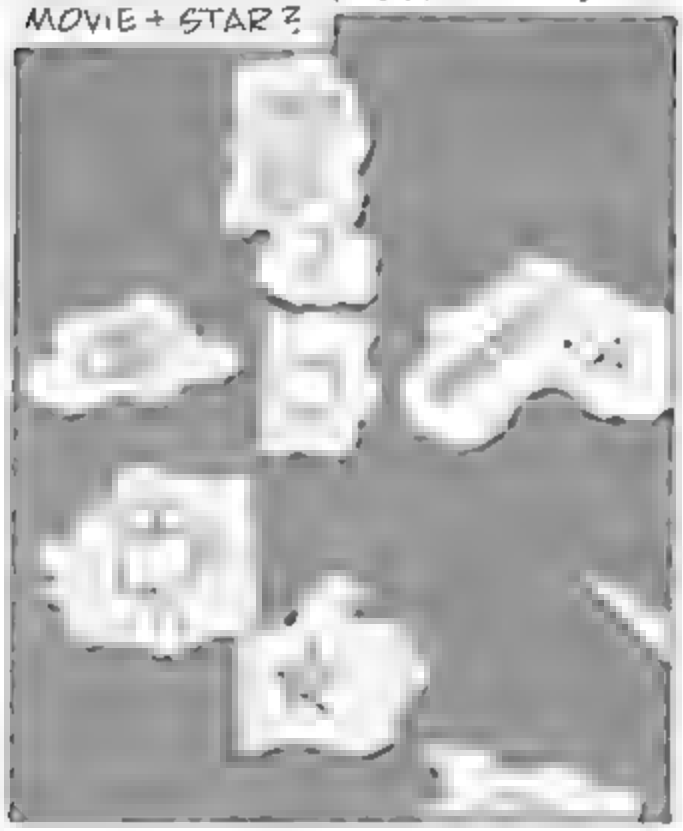
I'LL ADMIT I'VE STILL GOT A CERTAIN C WANDA AFFAIR"...

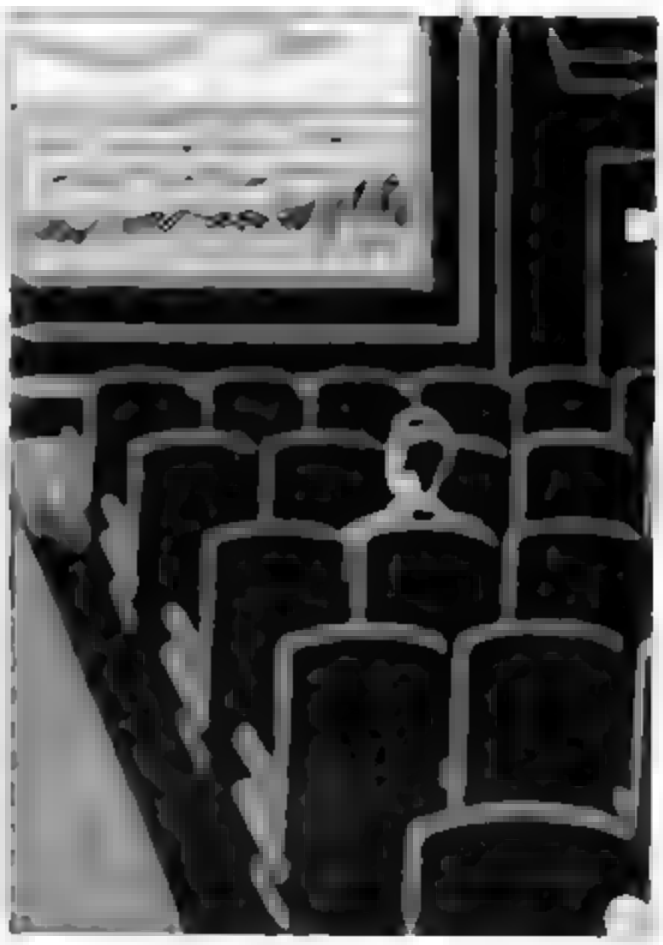
I CAN'T HELP BUT WONDER WHO SHOT ME IN THE HEAD, FOR INSTANCE.



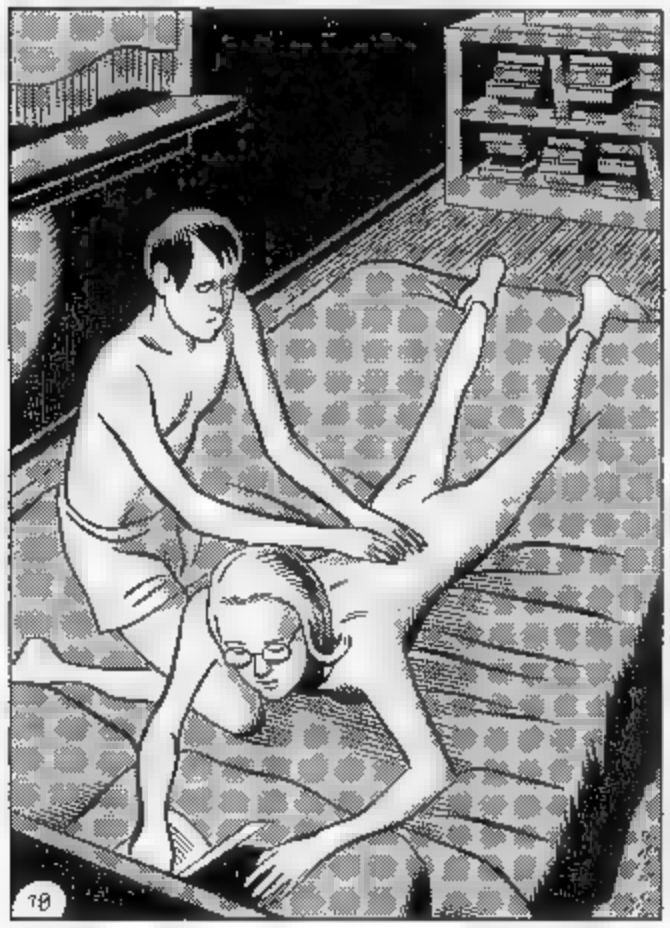
THE FEW PUZZLE PIECES THAT REMAIN (AS WITH THEIR BROTHER FRAGMENTS, SEVERAL WERE LOST AT

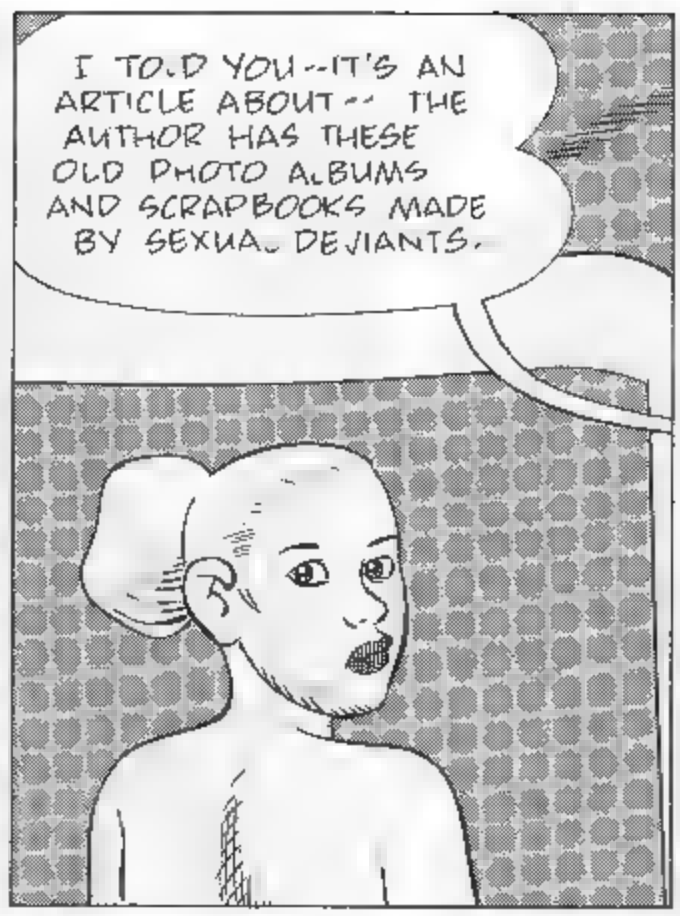
WAND + A. I UNDERSTAND... I + LOVE + WANDA? KEYS + TO + MY HEART? EYE + SPY? MOVIE + STAR?

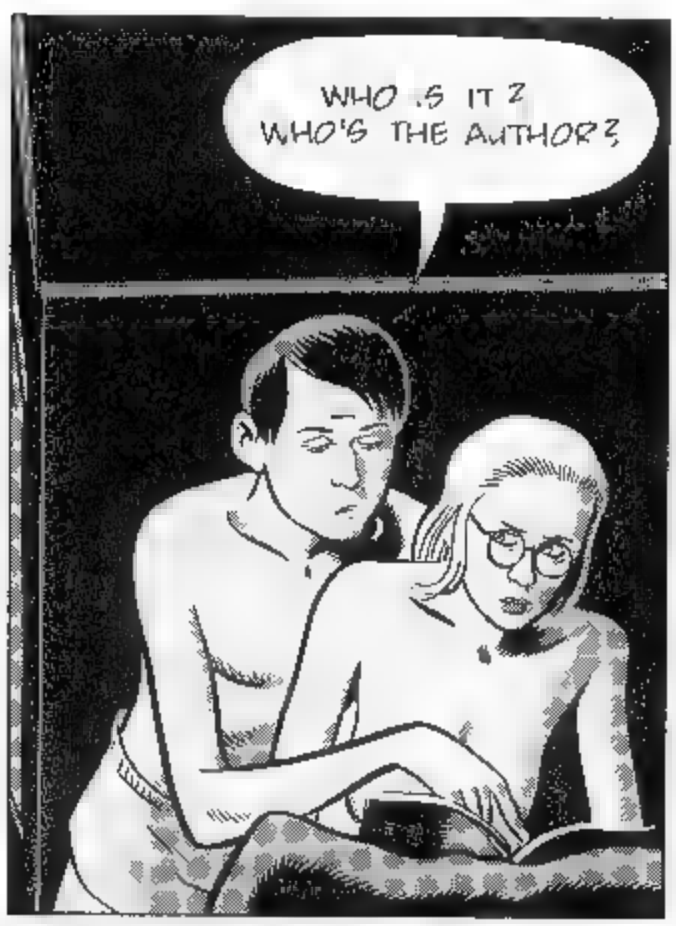




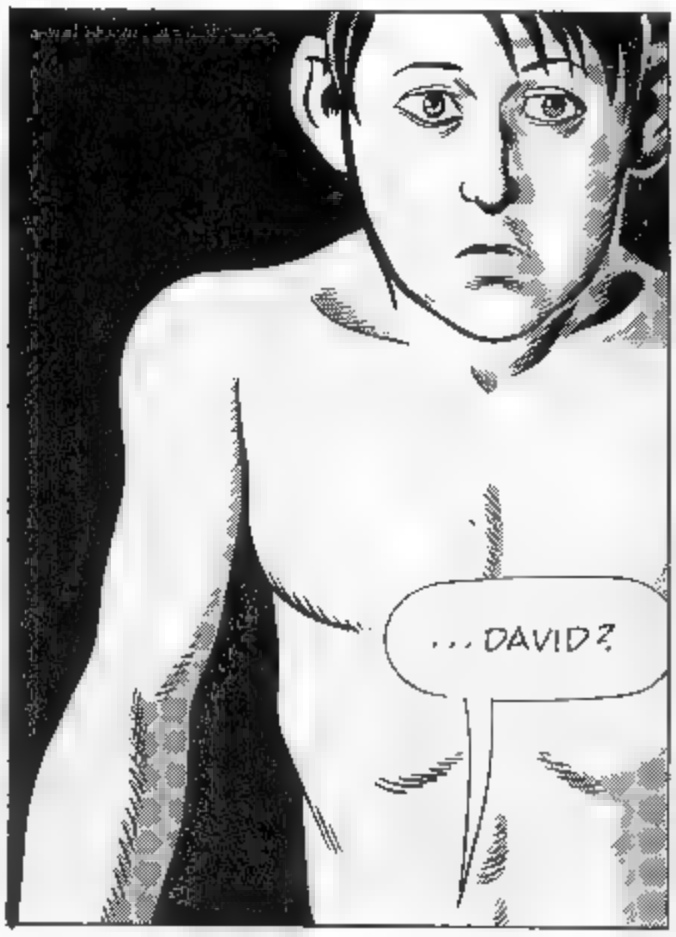
IN A MOMENT OF REVELATION IT CAME TO ME: THE EERIE BOY HAD FIRST APPEARED SOMETIME SHORTLY AFTER MY ONE PERFECT SEXUAL EXPERIENCE (MEMORIAL DAY, 1998), AND HAD BEEN DEVELOPING INDEPENDENTLY IN SOME REMOTE CHAMBER EVER SINCE, THE NEGLECTED GHOST-OFFSPRING OF THAT UNREPEATABLE UNION.

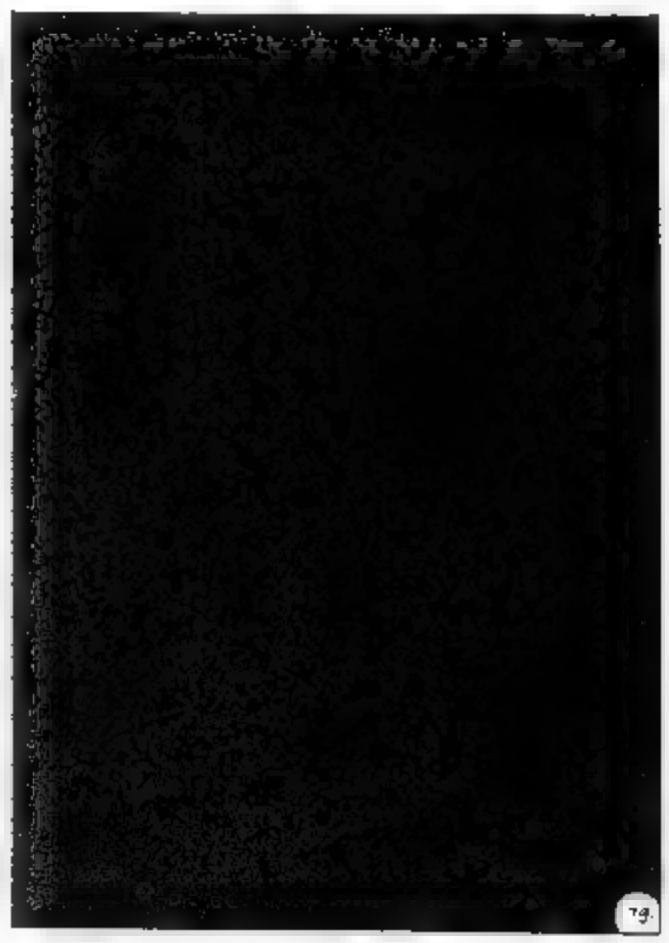


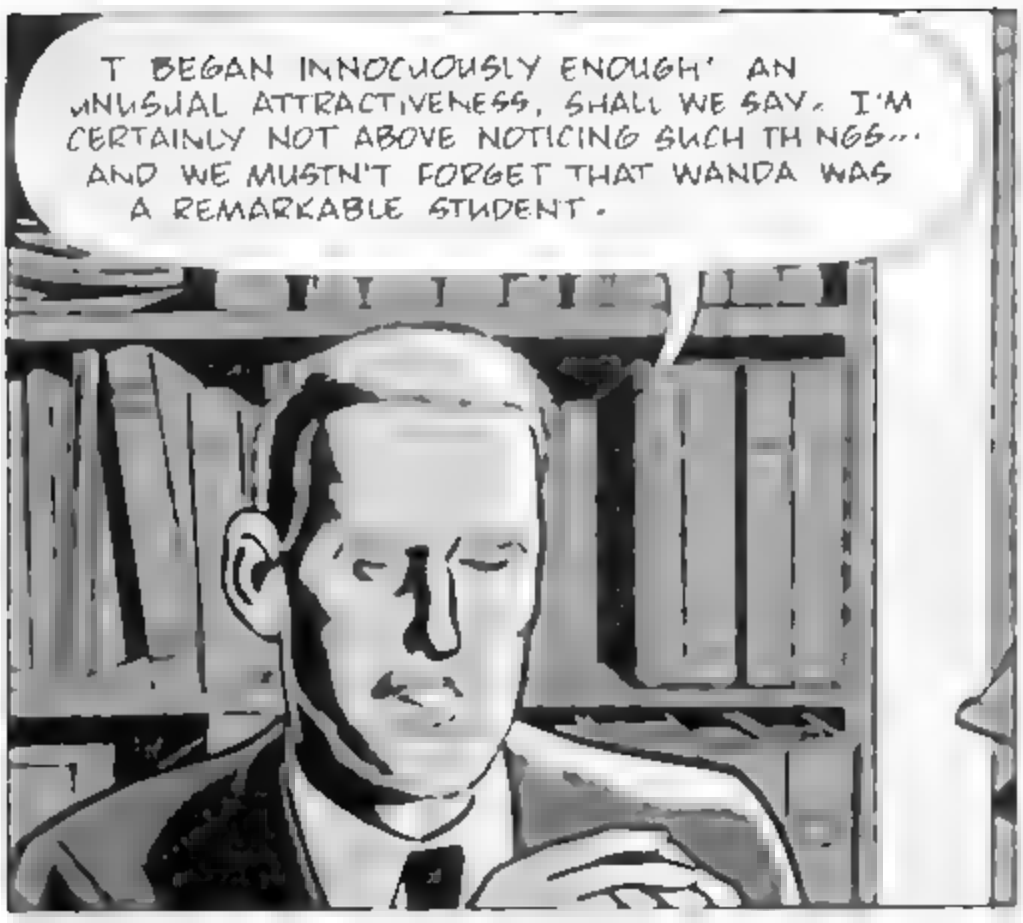




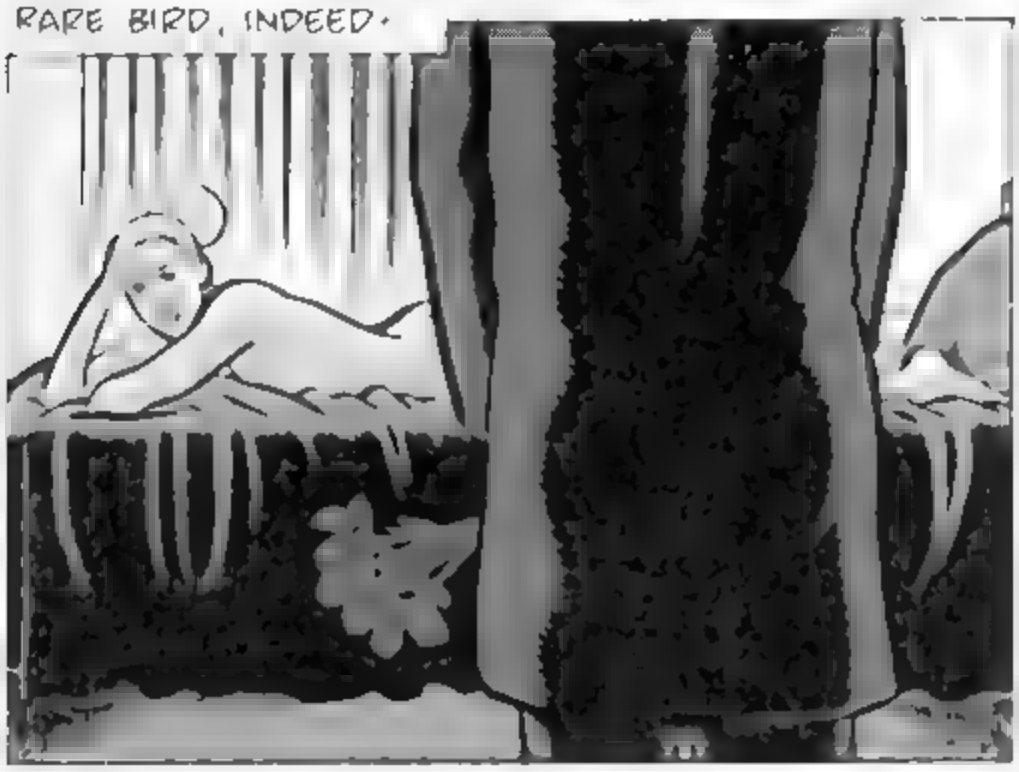
THE INDULGENT READER WILL RECALL THAT THE SCRAPBOOK FROM WHICH SEVERAL OF THESE EXAMPLES APPEAR TO HAVE BEEN TAKEN WAS GIVEN, UNDER DURESS, BY YOUR NARRATOR TO WANDA KRAMI ON THE EVENING OF MAY 15, 1998.






T BEGAN INNOCUOUSLY ENOUGH' AN UNUSUAL ATTRACTIVENESS, SHALL WE SAY. I'M CERTAINLY NOT ABOVE NOTICING SUCH TH NGS... AND WE MUSTN'T FORGET THAT WANDA WAS A REMARKABLE STUDENT.

"SHE SPOKE OF YOU ONLY ONCE, WHEN SHE GAVE ME YOUR SCRAPBOOK. SHE WAS SO CLEVER; SHE COULD DRIVE YOU MAD WITH JEALOUSY!


"I DON'T KNOW HOW TO EXPLAIN IT, DAVID... SHE AND I WERE A PERFECT PAIR. SHE WAS A PERFECT WOMAN IN EVERY RESPECT, ANY SANE MAN WOULD DIE TO POSSESS SUCH A WOMAN. A RARE, RARE BIRD, INDEED.

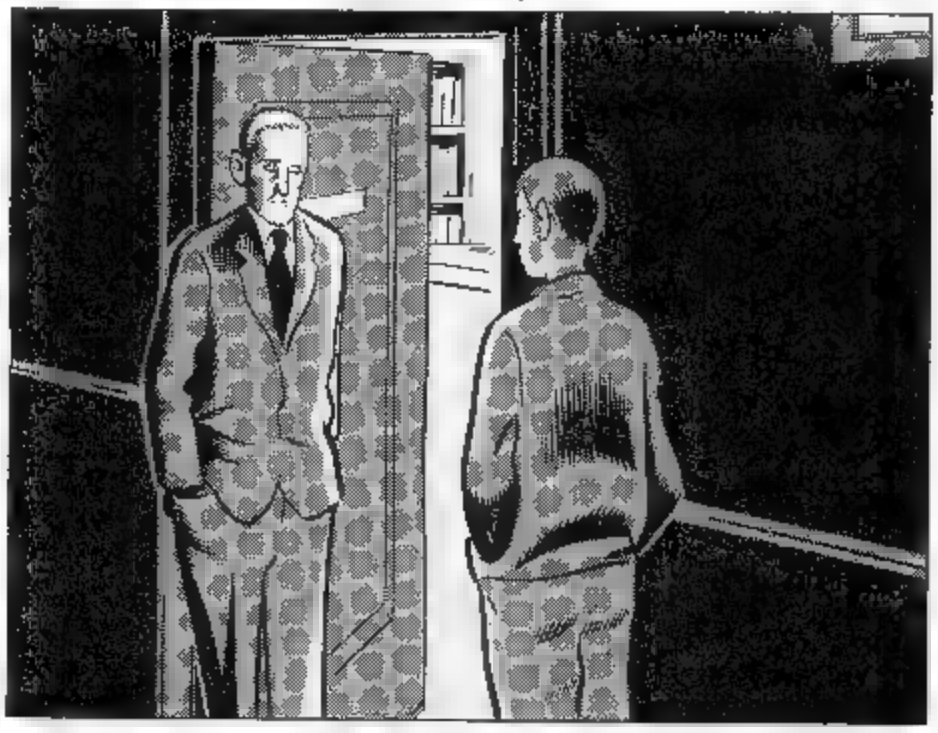
"LIKE A FOOL, I CHOSE TO BE 'HONORABLE' AND TOLD MY WIFE EVERYTHING. I STILL HAVEN'T RECOVERED, FINANCIALLY OR OTHERWISE.

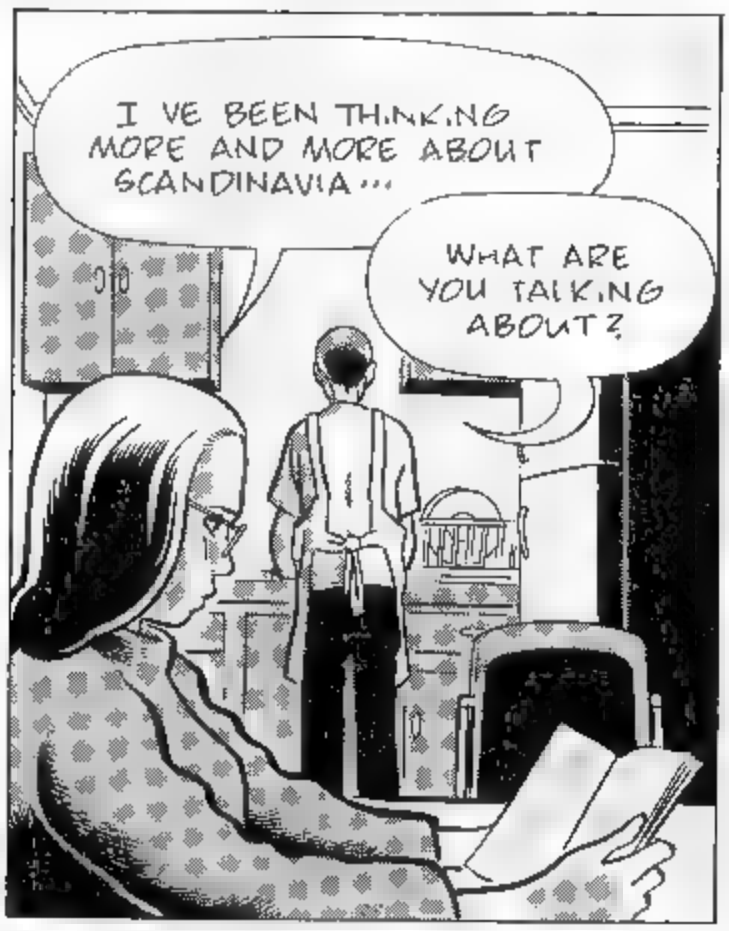
"AND WHAT WAS OUR PLAN? SIMPLY TO 'RUN OFF' TOGETHER. NEEDLESS TO SAY, IT DID NOT COME TO PASS.

"I ASSUMED, ERRONEOUSLY AS WE KNOW, THAT SHE HAD CHOSEN YOU. I BEG YOUR FORGIVENESS, DAVID, FOR MY MANY LAPSES IN JUDGMENT."

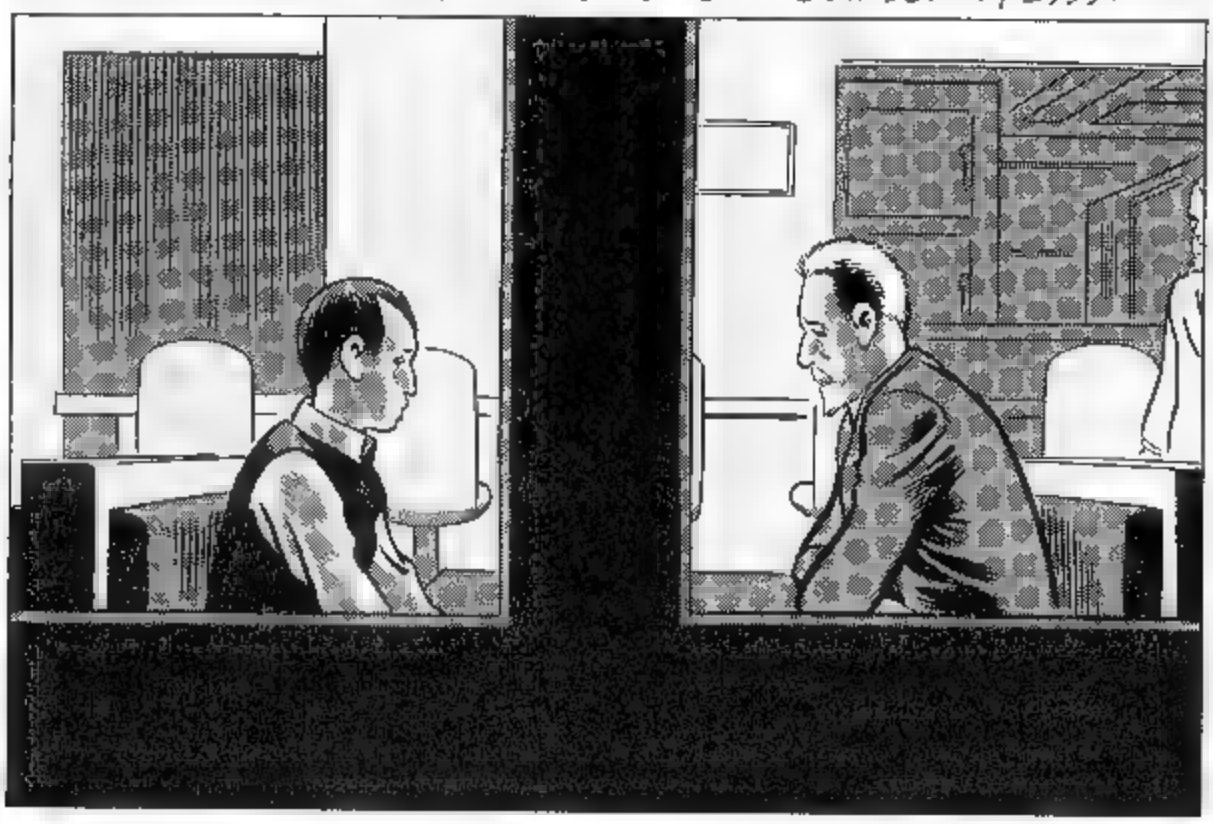
THE SHOOTING ITSELF WAS NOT MENTIONED BY NAME, AND HIS MOST PROFUSE APOLOGY CAME FOR THE LESS-THAN-CHARITABLE ANALYSIS OF MY CHARACTER IN HIS SCRAPBOOK ARTICLE.

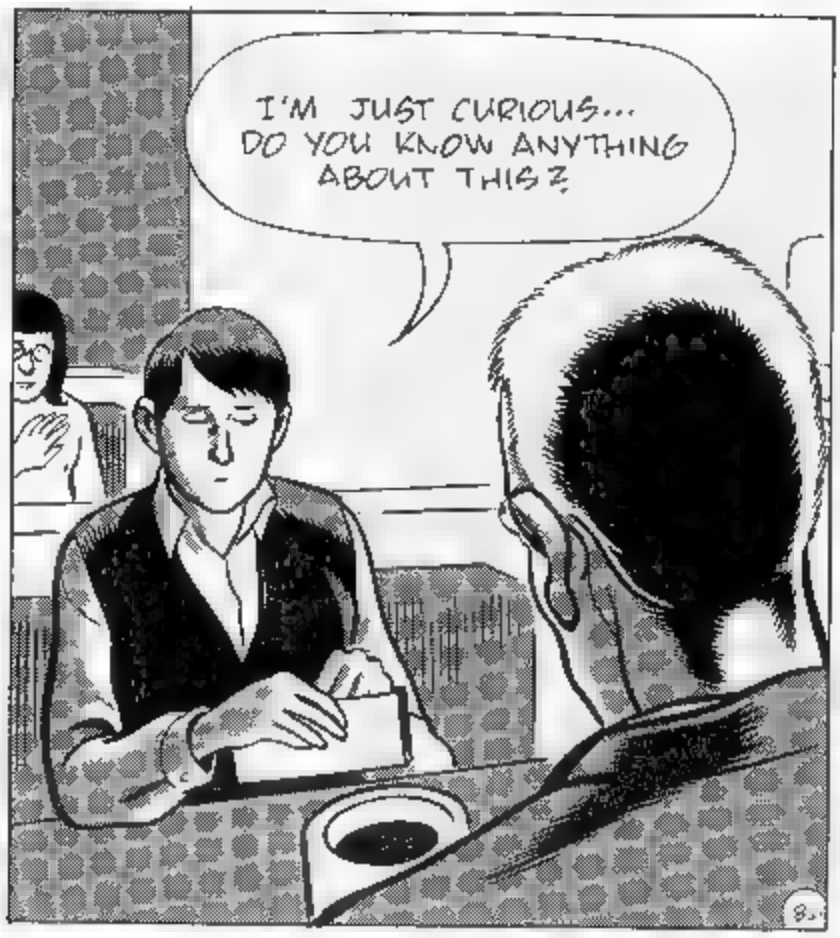
I COULDN'T HELP BUT FEEL FOR KARKES, THOUGH THE WANDA HE DESCRIBED SOUNDED DISCONCERTINGLY UNLIKE MY OWN. WE PARTED AMICABLY, MUTUALLY SATISFIED THAT OUR DUEL HAD ENDED IN A LOSER'S DRAW.



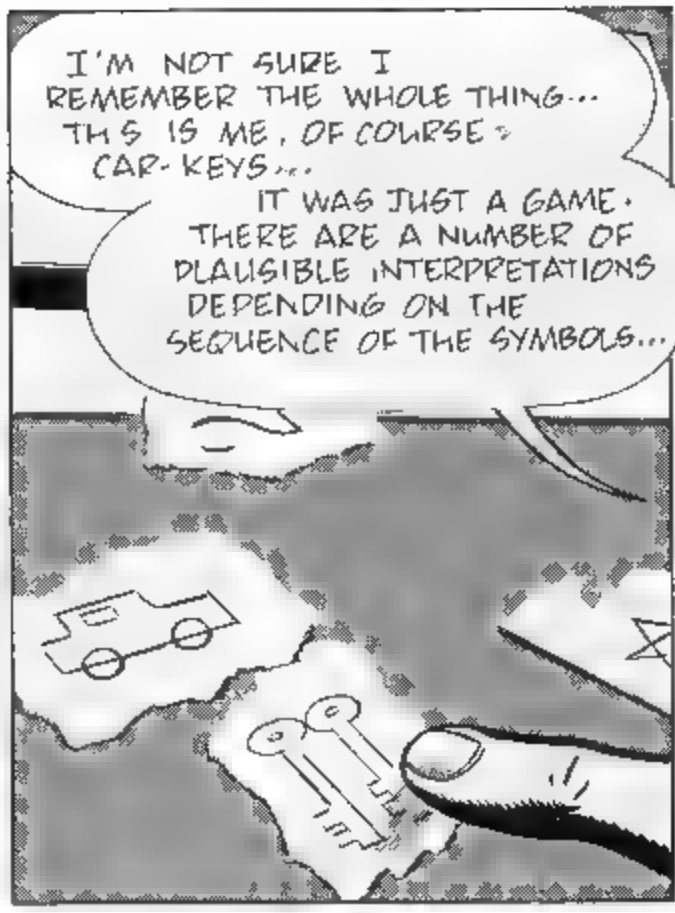


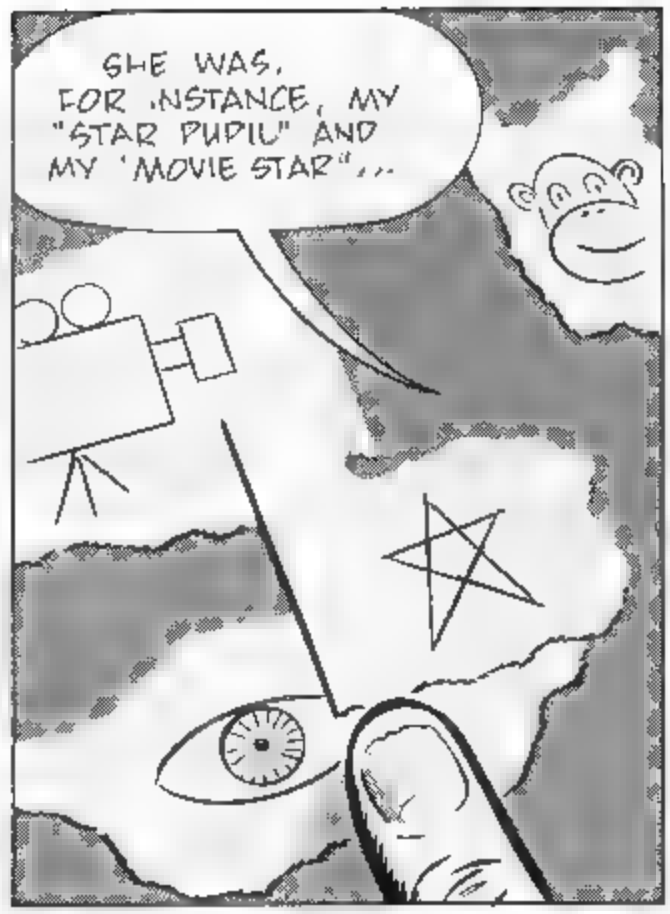
INEVITABLY, LIKE THE ONLY TWO ALCOHOLICS IN A DRY COUNTY, KARKES AND I WERE TO MEET AGAIN. THE SECOND CONGRESS OF "THE WANDA CLUB" TAKES PLACE ON OCTOBER 4, 1999.



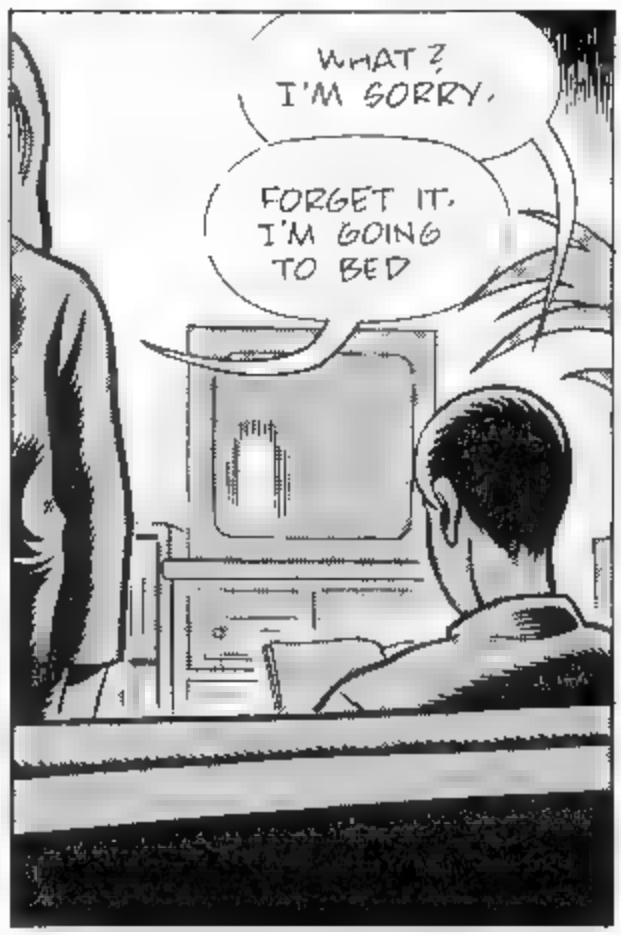


THAT LOOKS LIKE ONE OF MINE ...

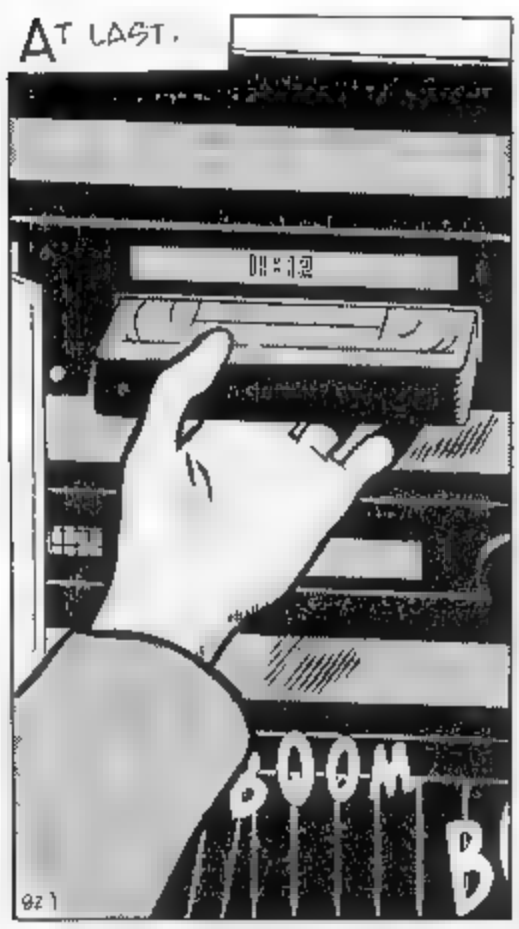

I'M NOT SURE I REMEMBER THE WHOLE THING... THIS IS ME, OF COURSE: CAR-KEYS...
IT WAS JUST A GAME. THERE ARE A NUMBER OF PLAUSIBLE INTERPRETATIONS DEPENDING ON THE SEQUENCE OF THE SYMBOLS...


SHE WAS, FOR INSTANCE, MY "STAR PUPIL" AND MY 'MOVIE STAR"...

AFTER THREE MEETINGS, WE HAVE COME TO A TACIT AGREEMENT TO POOL OUR EFFORTS IN SOME SORT OF LIMITED SEARCH. IN THE INTEREST OF CLUE-GATHERING, K. HAS GIVEN ME, WITH CRYPTIC PRE-EMPTIVES, A VIDEO TAKEN OF WANDA (!!) IN HER APARTMENT LAST MAY.
YOU'RE NOT EVEN LISTENING, ARE YOU?
WHY DO I BOTHER?


WHAT? I'M SORRY.
FORGET IT. I'M GOING TO BED

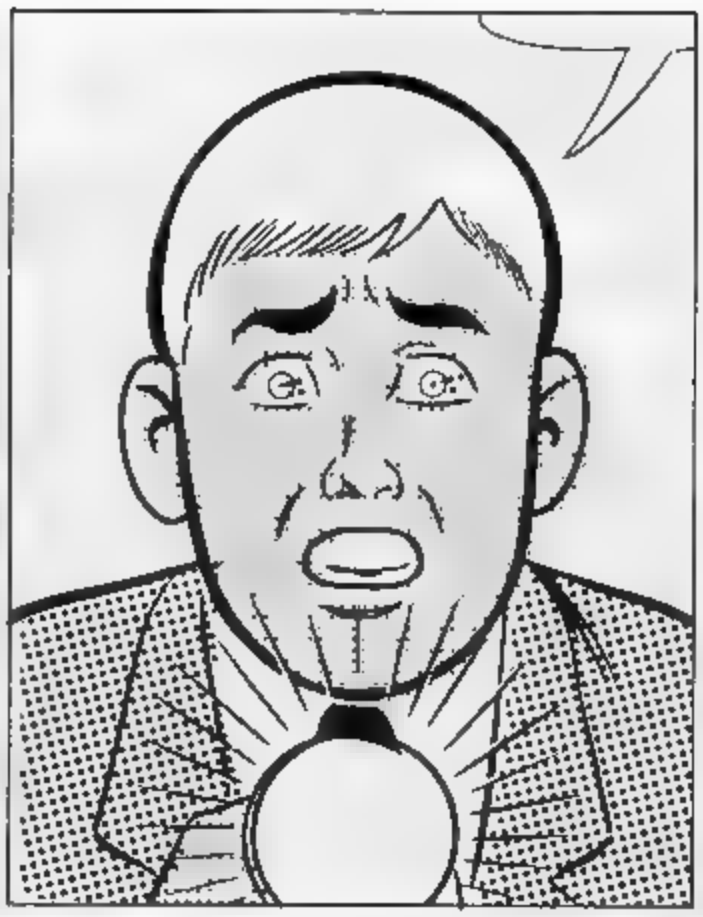
CLICK

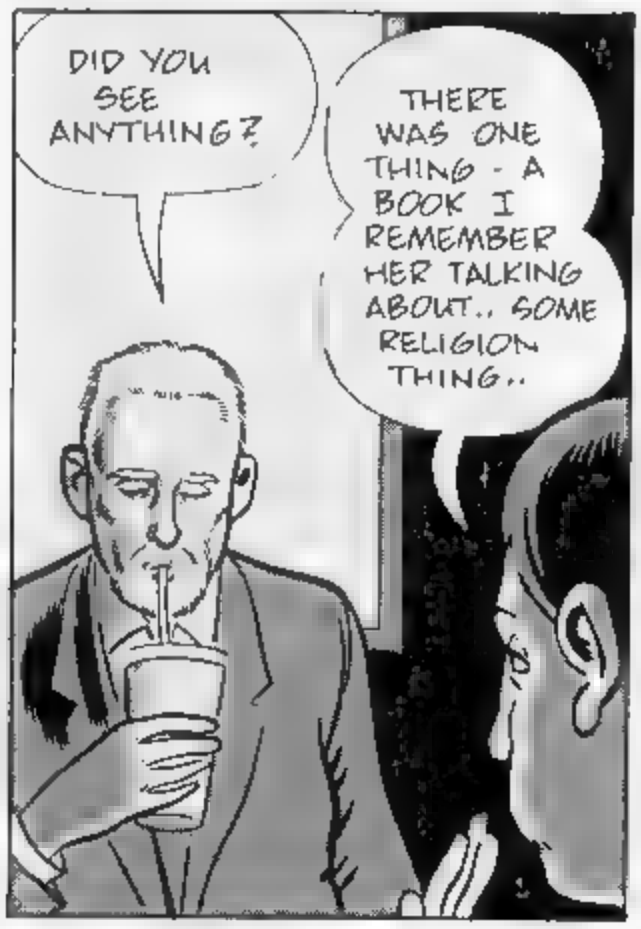

AT LAST.
BOOM

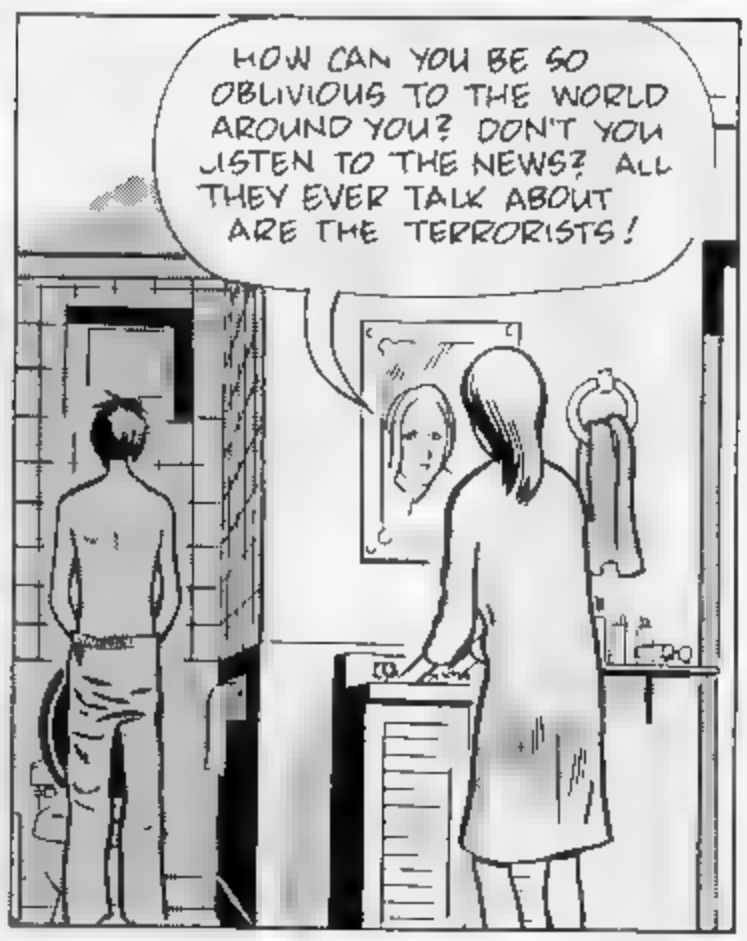
OM BOOM

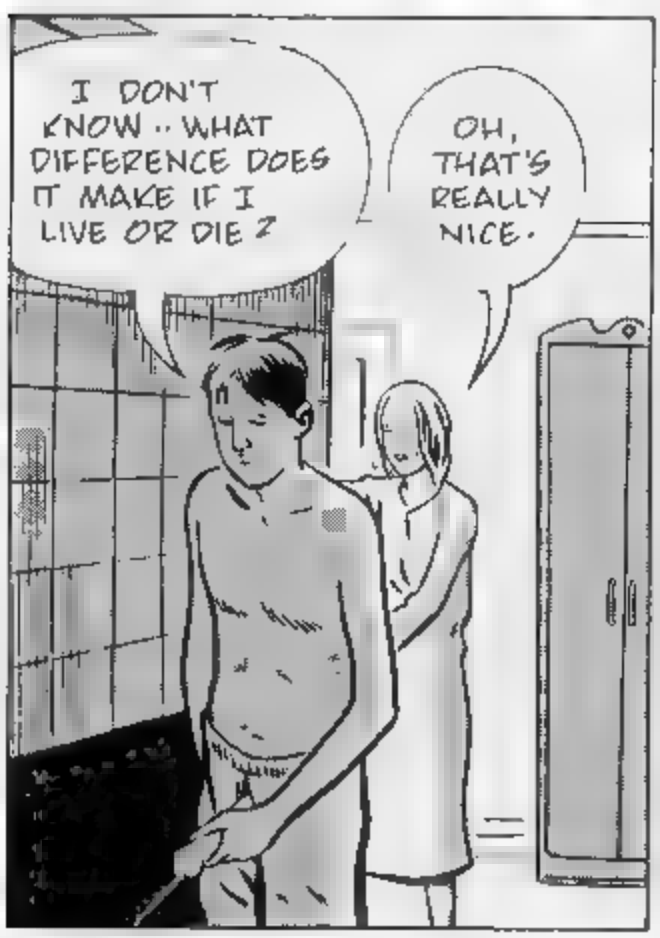
IT LOOKS LIKE WANDA, BUT HER MANNER IS ENTIRELY UNFAMILIAR. IT'S LIKE WATCHING A FAVORITE ACTRESS STRUGGLE TO PLAY AN UNWORTHY ROLE ..
BO

DUMBFOUNDED, I AM NO MATCH FOR THE UNBEARABLE SECONDS BEFORE THE FINAL BLACKOUT.









TODAY, WED. OCT. 16. THE WANDA CLUB MEETS WITH MR. HOWE A SEMI-RETIRED PRIVATE INVESTIGATOR

SHE'S NOT WANDA, EXACTLY, BUT THE RESEMBLANCES ARE SURPRISING. SHE HAS AGED WELL (AS I KNEW WANDA WOULD) AND RADIATES AN OVERALL SENSE OF STRENGTH AND HEALTH. WHERE ARE THE TIMPANI HEARTBEATS?

YOUR WANDA DOESN'T SOUND ANYTHING LIKE MY WANDA NOT THAT I'M SURPRISED.

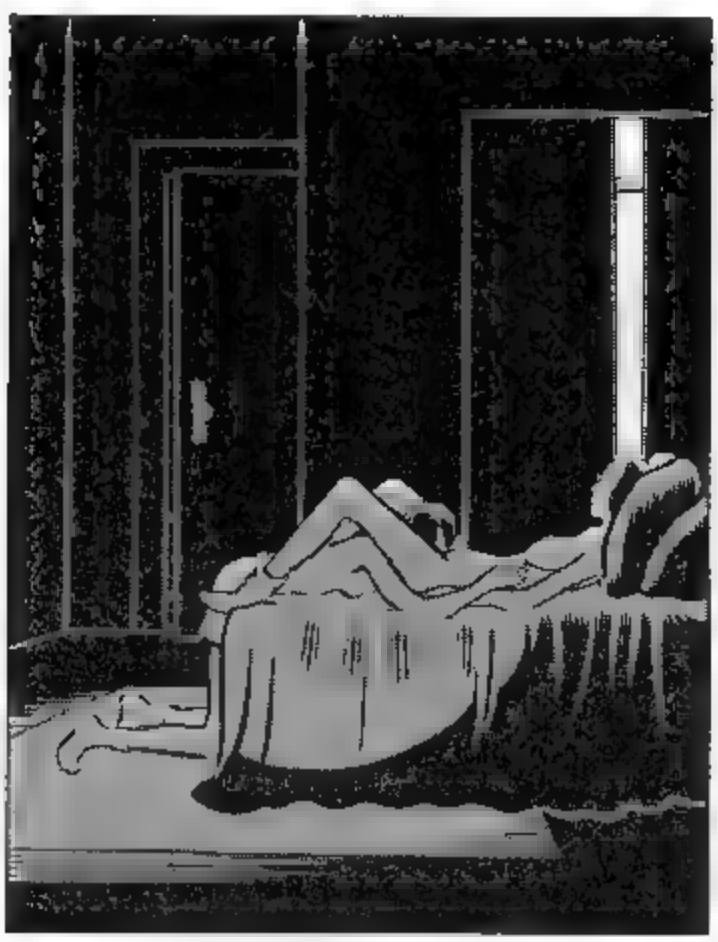
WANDA WOULD DO WHAT SHE HAD TO TO GET A MAN TO LOVE HER... SHE WAS A VERY TALENTED LITTLE ACTRESS!

SO, SHE HAD A LOT OF BOYFRENDS?
YOU POOR THING... SHE REALLY HOOKED YOU..

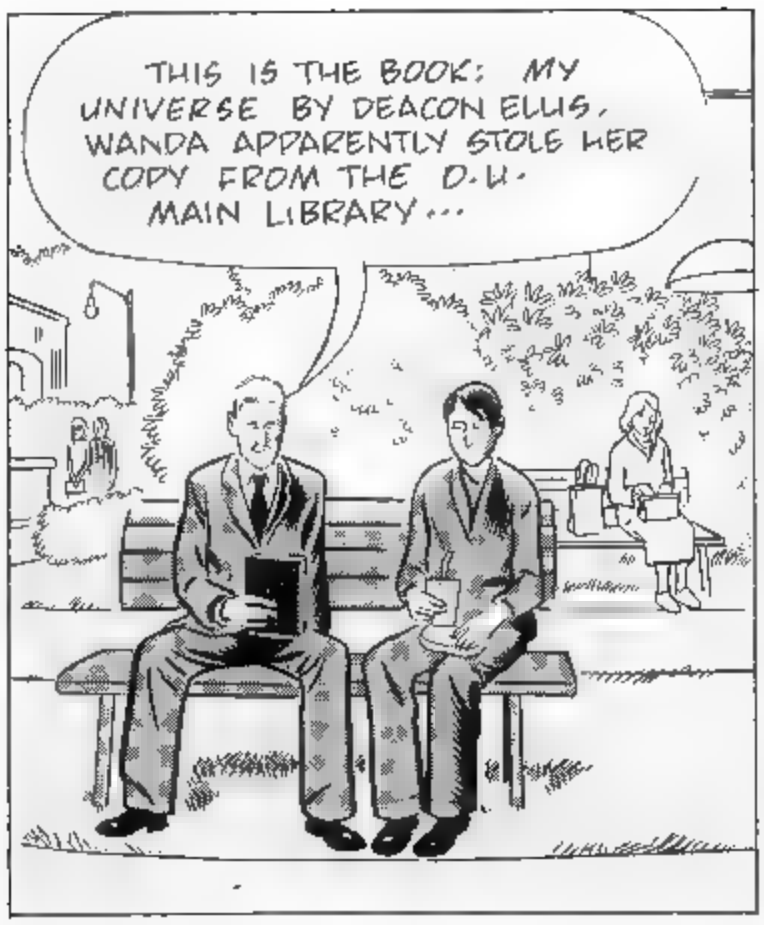
WHEN SHE WAS 15 HER MUSIC TEACHER LEFT HIS WIFE FOR HER. THAT WAS LOTS OF FUN!

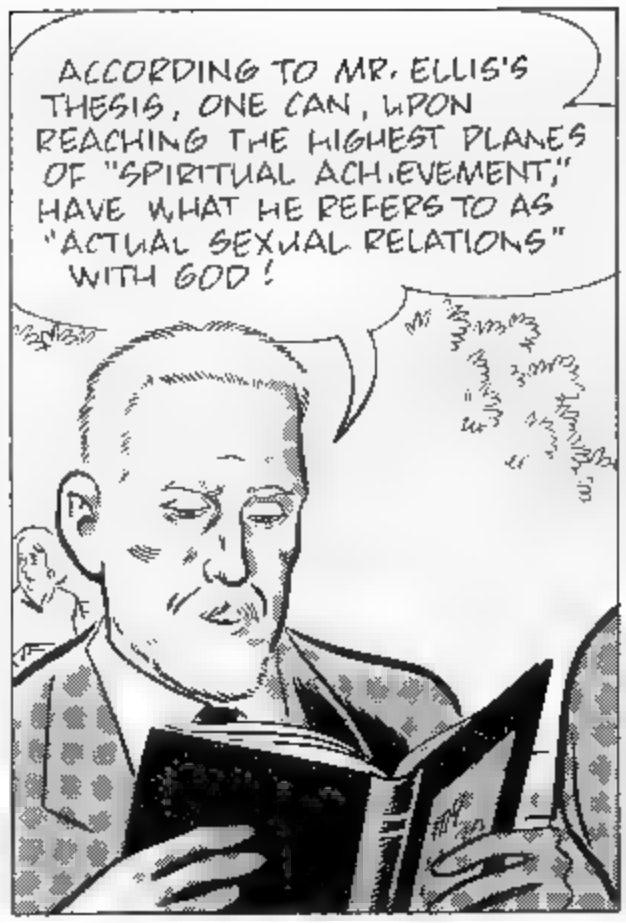
SHE'S A VERY EXPERIENCED GIRL. ALWAYS LOOKING FOR THAT PERFECT GUY TO REPLACE DADDY ... I KNOW HOW THAT IS...
SHE'LL GET OVER IT IN A FEW YEARS..

YOU SEEM LIKE A REALLY SWEET GUY.. YOU'LL FIND SOMEBODY ELSE!

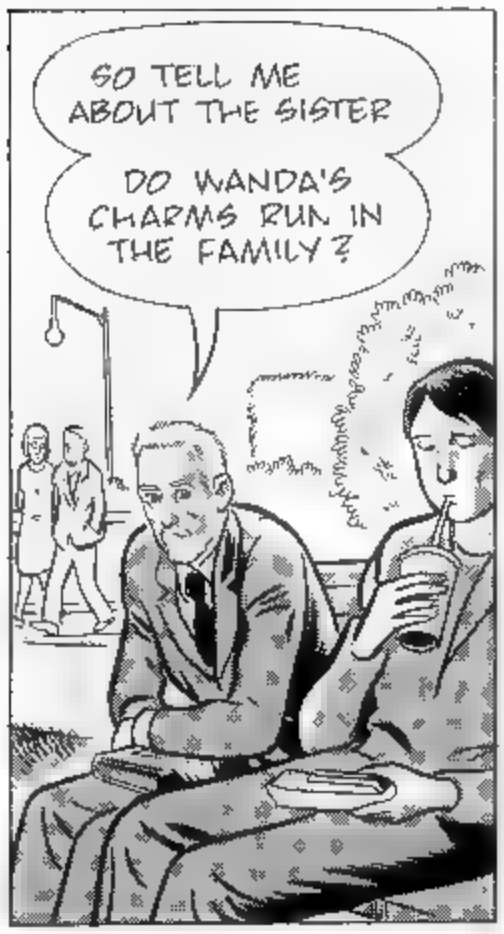


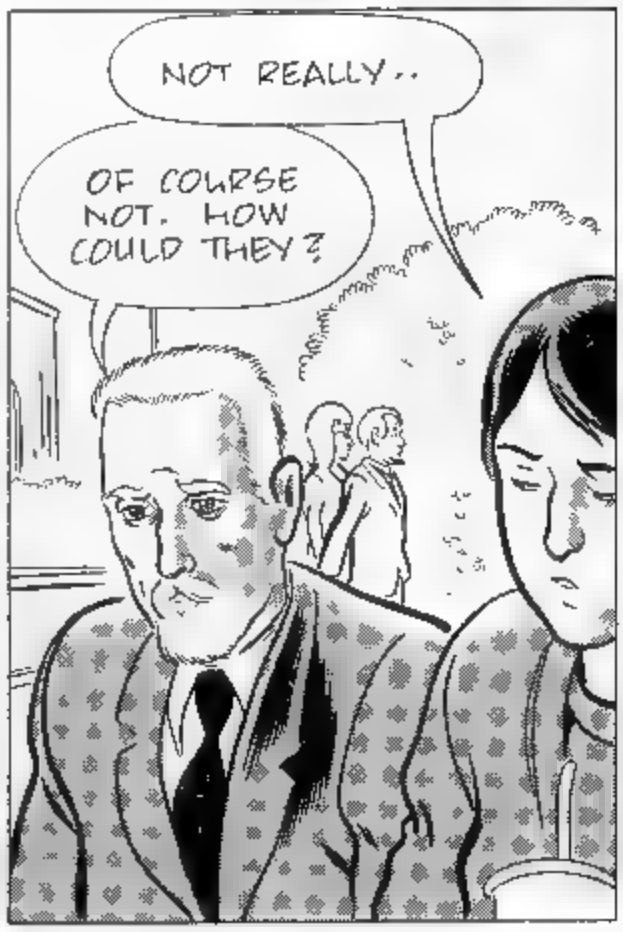
THIS ISN'T WORKING.

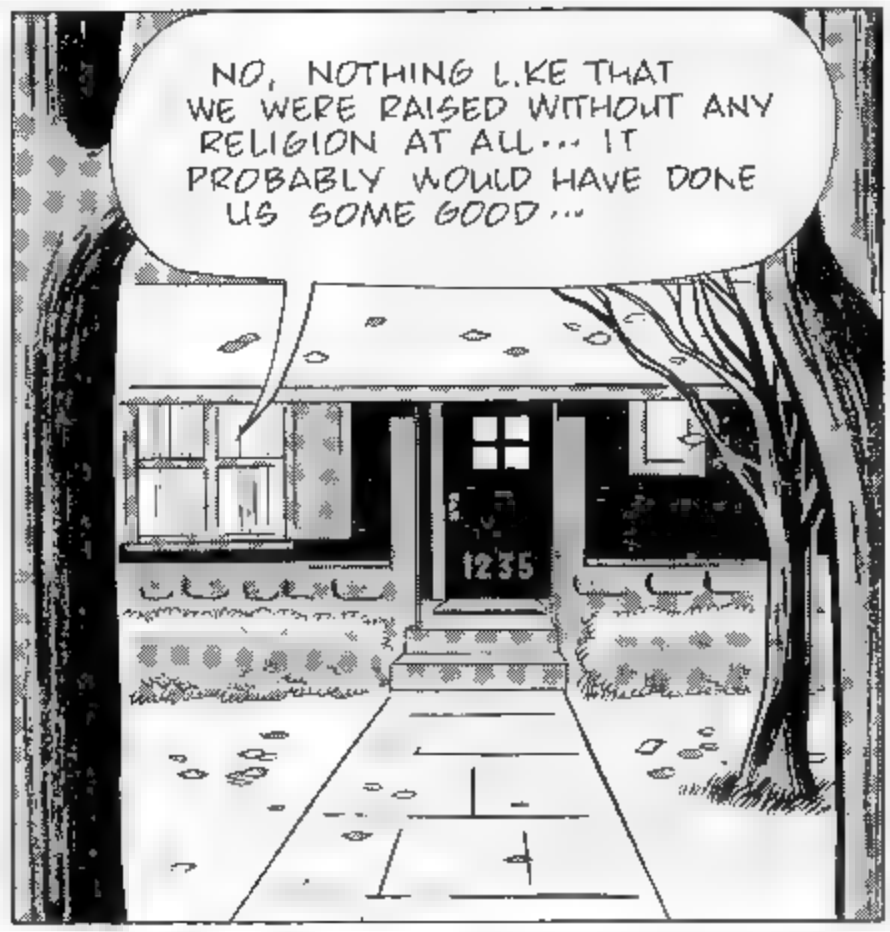

THIS IS THE BOOK: MY UNIVERSE BY DEACON ELLIS. WANDA APPARENTLY STOLE HER COPY FROM THE D.U. MAIN LIBRARY...


ACCORDING TO MR. ELLIS'S THESIS, ONE CAN, UPON REACHING THE HIGHEST PLANES OF "SPIRITUAL ACHIEVEMENT," HAVE WHAT HE REFERS TO AS "ACTUAL SEXUAL RELATIONS" WITH GOD!

I BELIEVE IT WAS INTENDED AS A PARODY OF SOMETHING OR OTHER... I CAN'T IMAGINE SHE TOOK IT VERY SERIOUSLY...


SO TELL ME ABOUT THE SISTER
DO WANDA'S CHARMS RUN IN THE FAMILY?

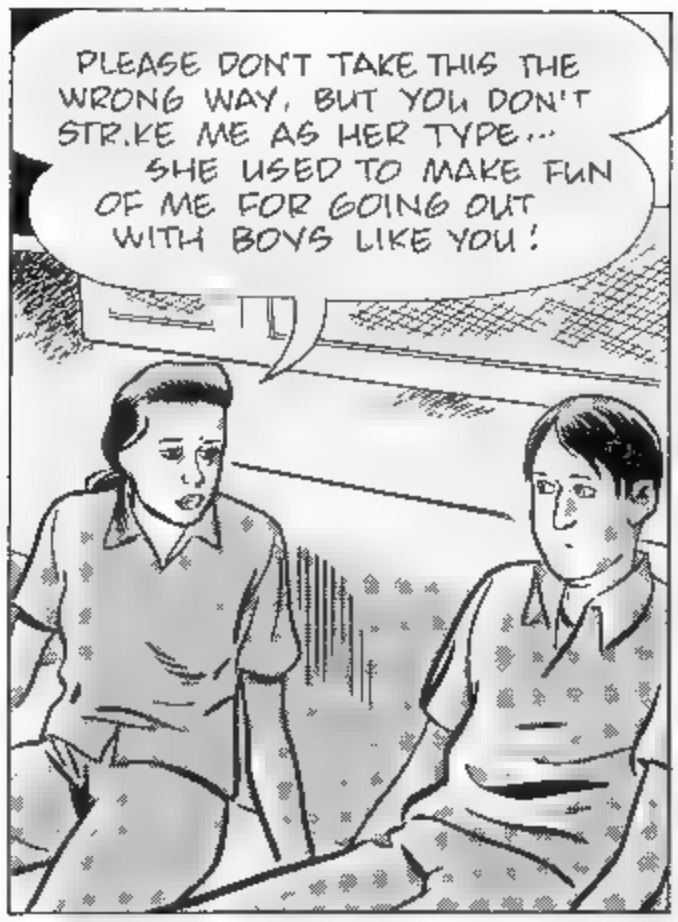

NOT REALLY..
OF COURSE NOT. HOW COULD THEY?


NO, NOTHING LIKE THAT WE WERE RAISED WITHOUT ANY RELIGION AT ALL... IT PROBABLY WOULD HAVE DONE US SOME GOOD...
1235

YOU DIDN'T REALLY TAKE THE TRAIN ALL THE WAY OUT HERE JUST TO ASK ME THAT?
YEAH, WELL..

YOU REALLY ARE NUTS.
I AGREE. I'M COMPLETELY OUT OF MY MIND.

I MEAN, IT'S OKAY... I JUST FEEL BAD FOR YOU.
I REALLY HOPE YOU DON'T MIND...


PLEASE DON'T TAKE THIS THE WRONG WAY, BUT YOU DON'T STRIKE ME AS HER TYPE... SHE USED TO MAKE FUN OF ME FOR GOING OUT WITH BOYS LIKE YOU!

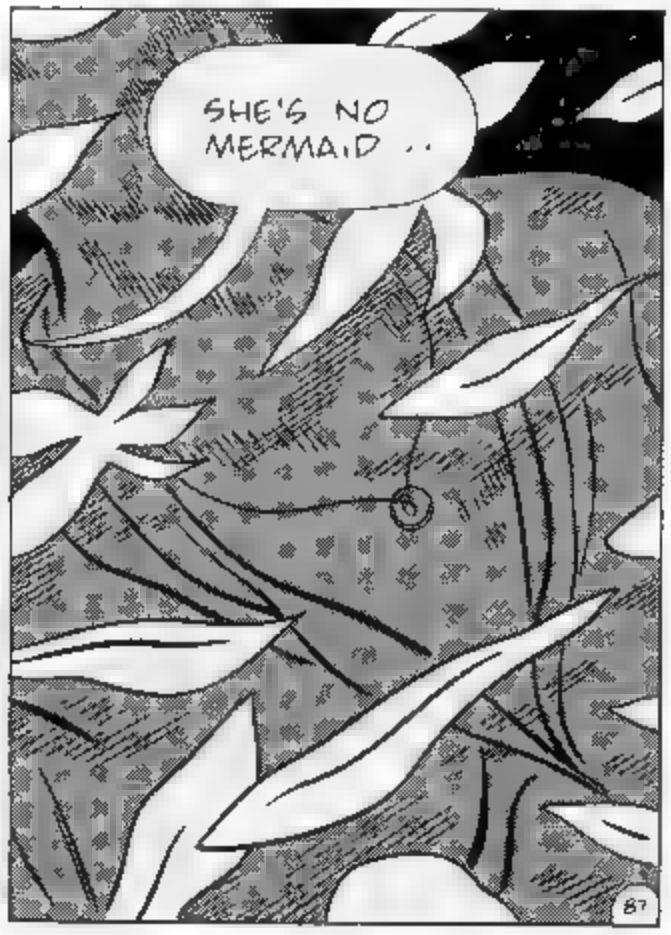
IS THIS YOUR HUSBAND?

THAT'S HIM.
WANDA COULD HARDLY STAND TO SEE ME MARRIED FIRST!
I USED TO BE SO JEALOUS OF THAT LITTLE BITCH! IS HER HAIR STILL SO BLOND?

NO, IT'S BROWN LIKE YOURS.
REALLY? WILL WONDERS NEVER CEASE.

OOF!
WHAT THE HELL HAVE YOU GOT?

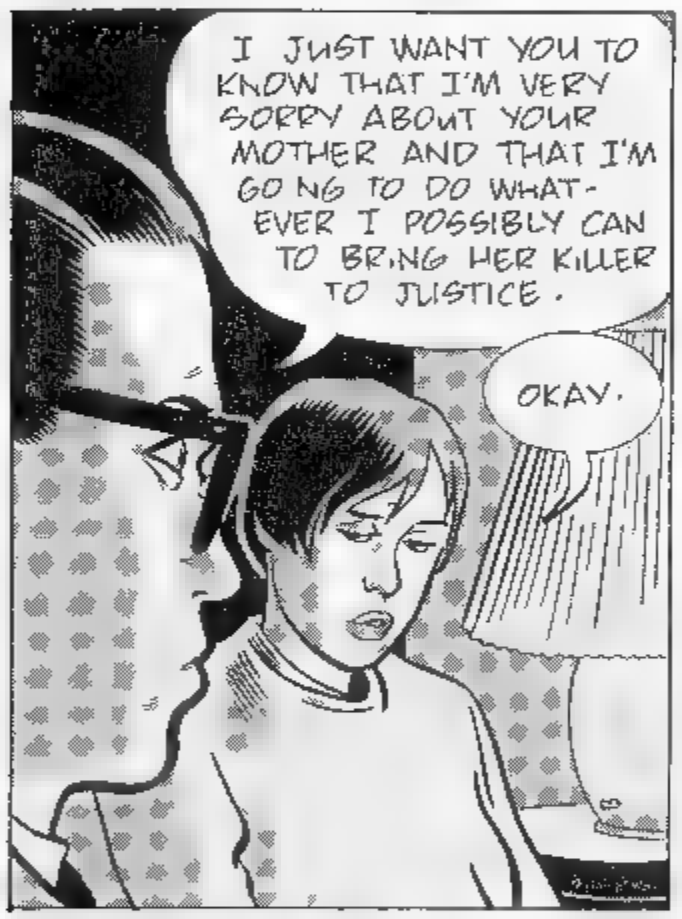
OH JESUS.


SHE'S NO MERMAID..

DOT, DO YOU MIND IF I TALK TO IRIS ALONE FOR A MINUTE?

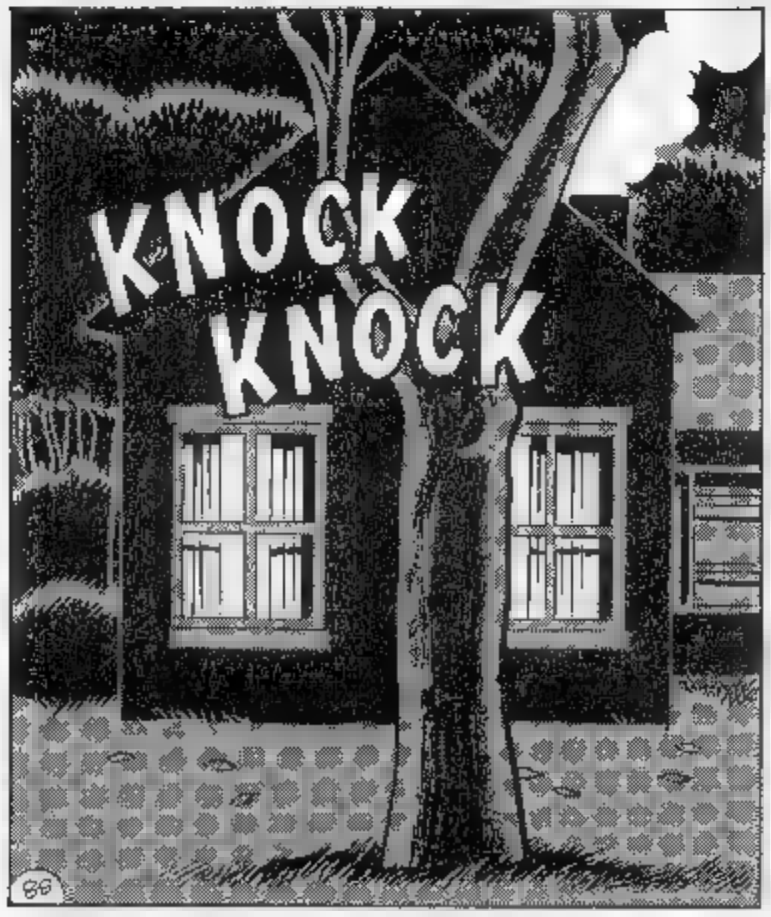
WE TOLD YOU WHO KILLED HER--WHAT ELSE DO YOU NEED?
PLEASE
IT'S OKAY..

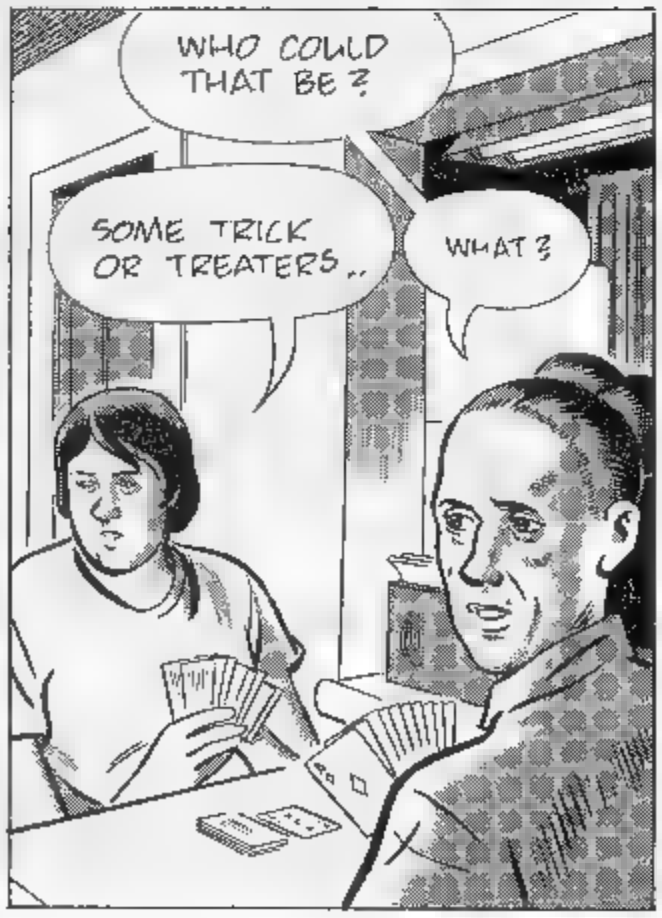
I'LL BE RIGHT HERE.


I JUST WANT YOU TO KNOW THAT I'M VERY SORRY ABOUT YOUR MOTHER AND THAT I'M GOING TO DO WHATEVER I POSSIBLY CAN TO BRING HER KILLER TO JUSTICE.
OKAY.

YOUR MOTHER WAS WEARING THIS WHEN WE GOT HER... I THOUGHT YOU MIGHT LIKE TO HAVE IT.

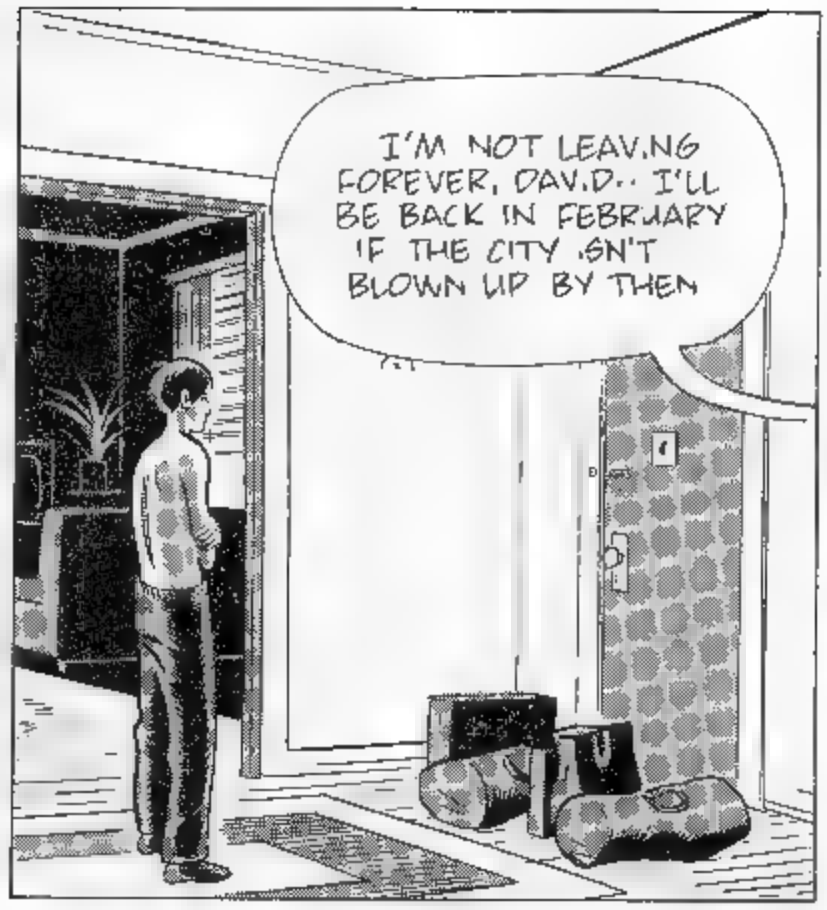
THANKS
PLEASE TRY NOT TO LOSE THAT, IRIS; WE MAY NEED IT FOR EVIDENCE.

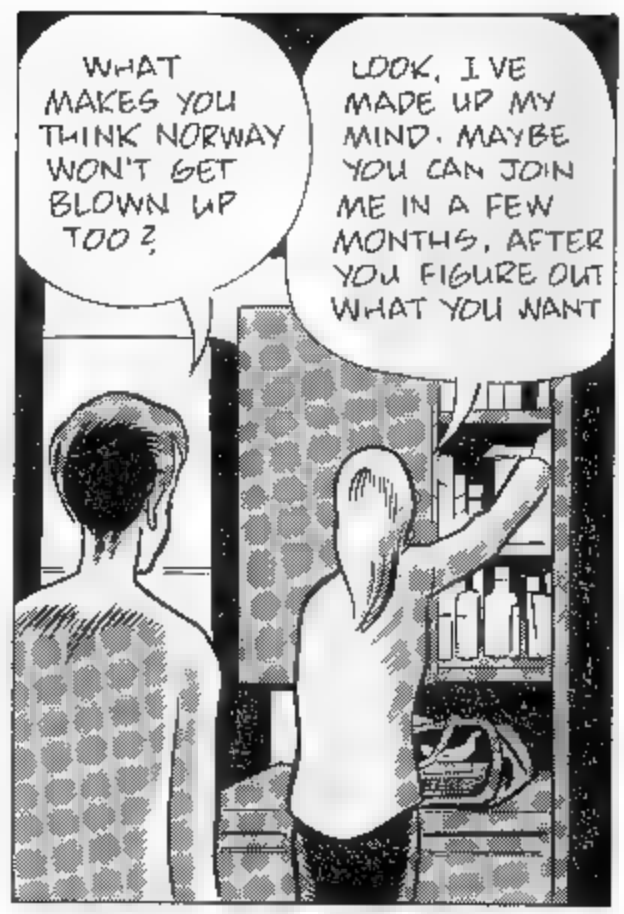

KNOCK KNOCK

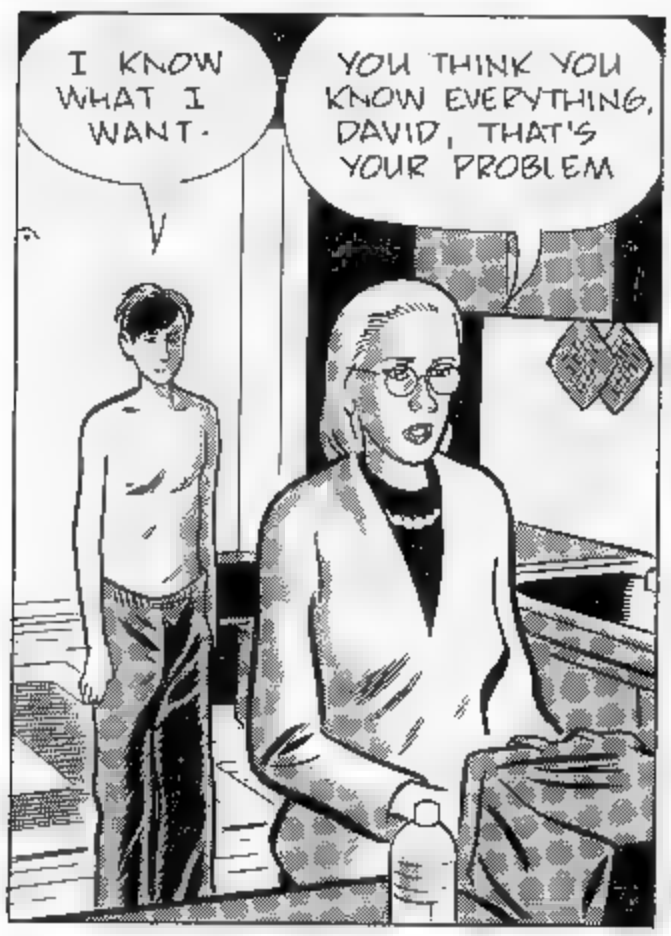

WHO COULD THAT BE?
SOME TRICK OR TREATERS..
WHAT?

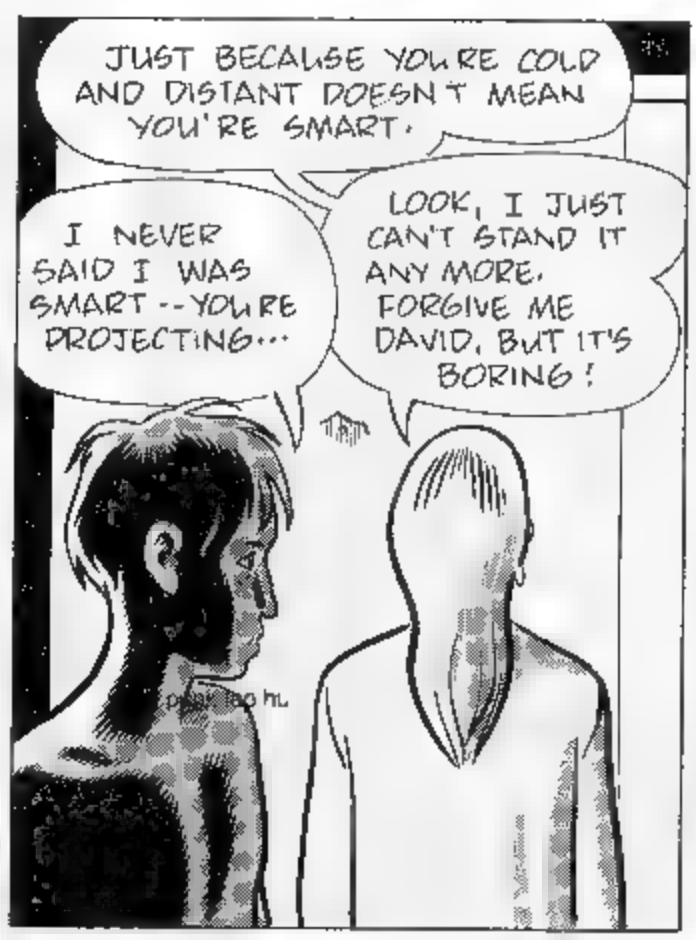
ISN'T TODAY THE THIRTY-FIRST?
THERE AREN'T ANY CHILDREN AROUND HERE

HELLO?
GOOD EVENING MA'AM, AGENT ROY SMITH. I'M LOOKING FOR MR. MANFRED ROLAND, JR.

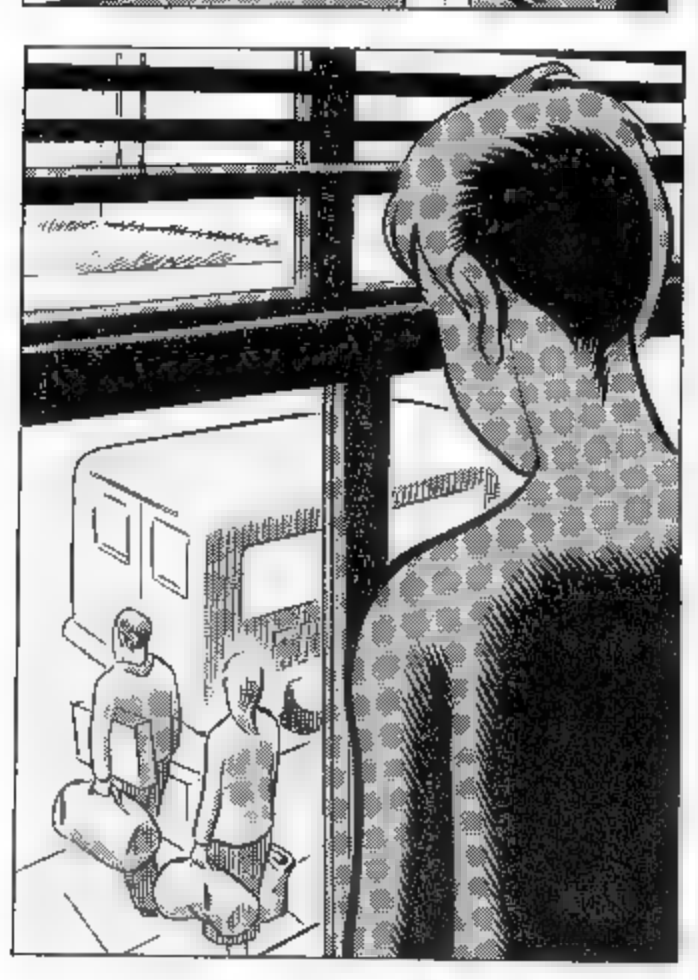

I'M NOT LEAVING FOREVER, DAVID.. I'LL BE BACK IN FEBRUARY IF THE CITY ISN'T BLOWN UP BY THEN


WHAT MAKES YOU THINK NORWAY WON'T GET BLOWN UP TOO?
LOOK, I'VE MADE UP MY MIND. MAYBE YOU CAN JOIN ME IN A FEW MONTHS, AFTER YOU FIGURE OUT WHAT YOU WANT


I KNOW WHAT I WANT.
YOU THINK YOU KNOW EVERYTHING, DAVID, THAT'S YOUR PROBLEM


JUST BECAUSE YOU'RE COLD AND DISTANT DOESN'T MEAN YOU'RE SMART.
I NEVER SAID I WAS SMART--YOU'RE PROJECTING...
LOOK, I JUST CAN'T STAND IT ANY MORE. FORGIVE ME DAVID, BUT IT'S BORING!

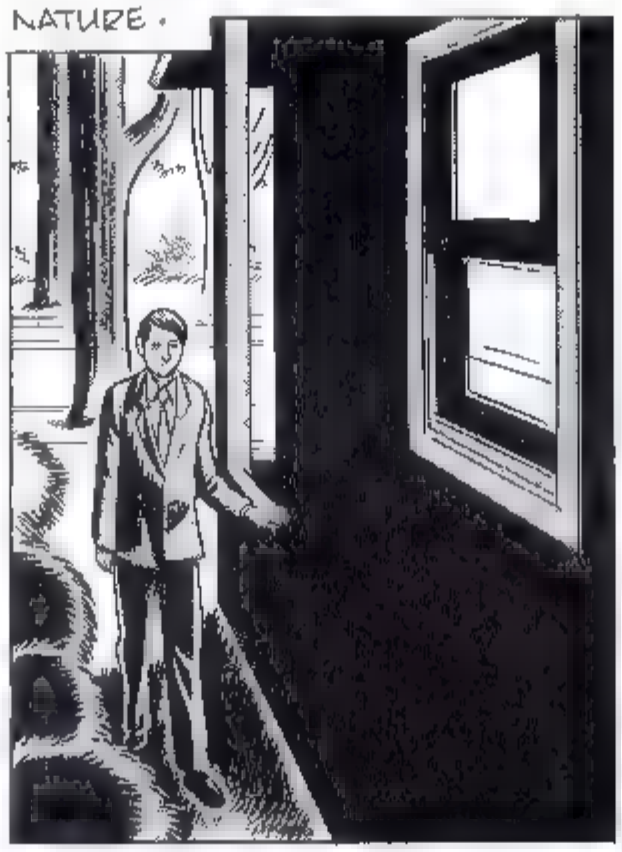
ANYTHING ELSE?
GOODBYE, DAVID.

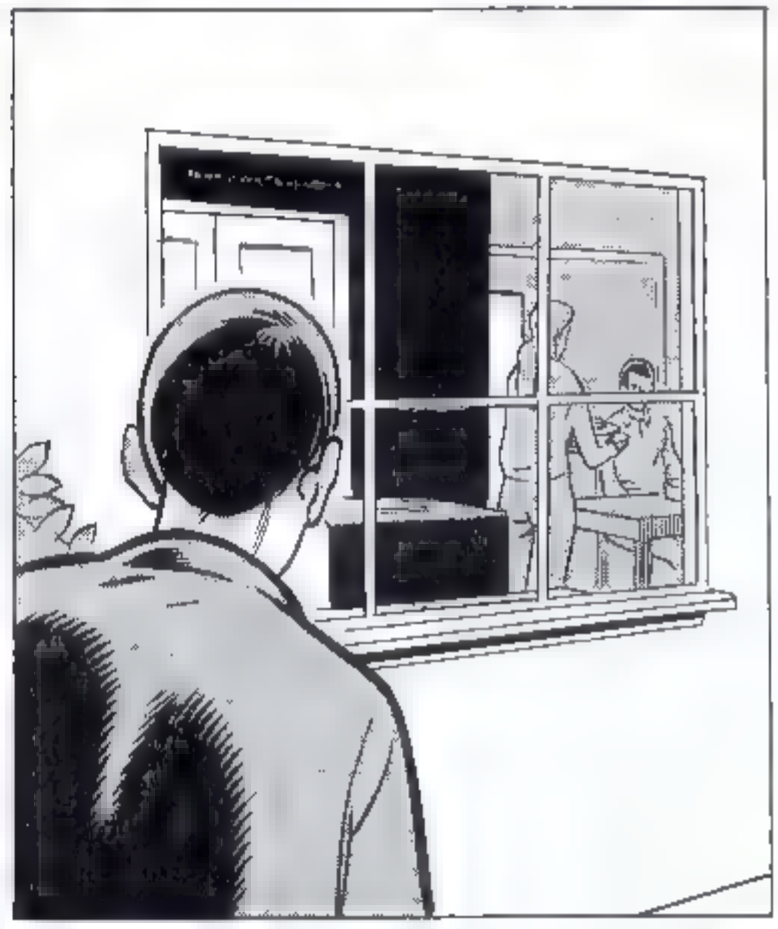


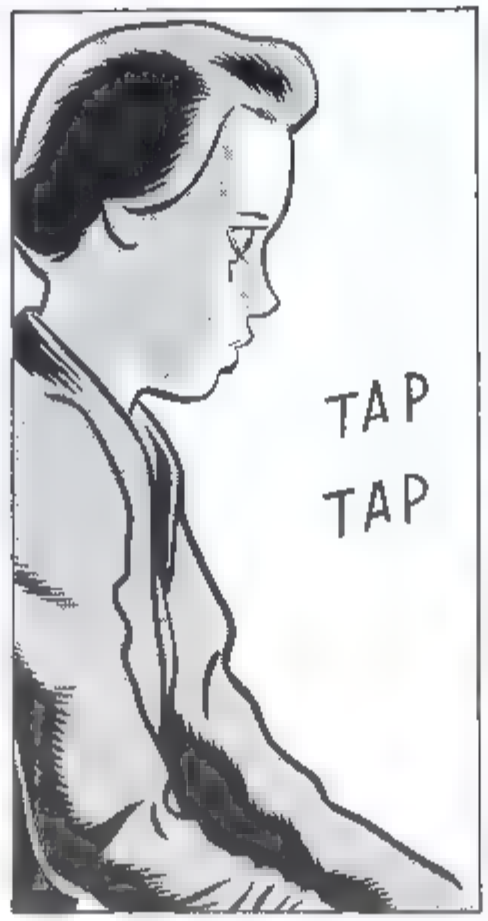
IN THE TIME SINCE NAOMI LEFT ME (6 HOURS AND COUNTING), I'VE HAD A CHANCE TO CATCH UP ON MY THINKING. I CAN'T DECIDE IF I NEED HELP OR IF I'M REALLY NO MORE SCREWED UP THAN ANY BODY ELSE. IS THERE ANYTHING WRONG WITH BEING A LITTLE OBSESSIVE? AT LEAST I'M NOT AS BAD AS KARKES!

POOR KARKES; I HAVEN'T TALKED TO H.M IN A WHILE. THERE'S SOMETHING UNHEALTHY ABOUT OUR RELATIONSHIP. HE'S NOT A VERY GOOD ROLE MODEL.

I AM RESOLVED, IF ANYTHING, TO FOLLOW MY OWN TRUE NATURE.



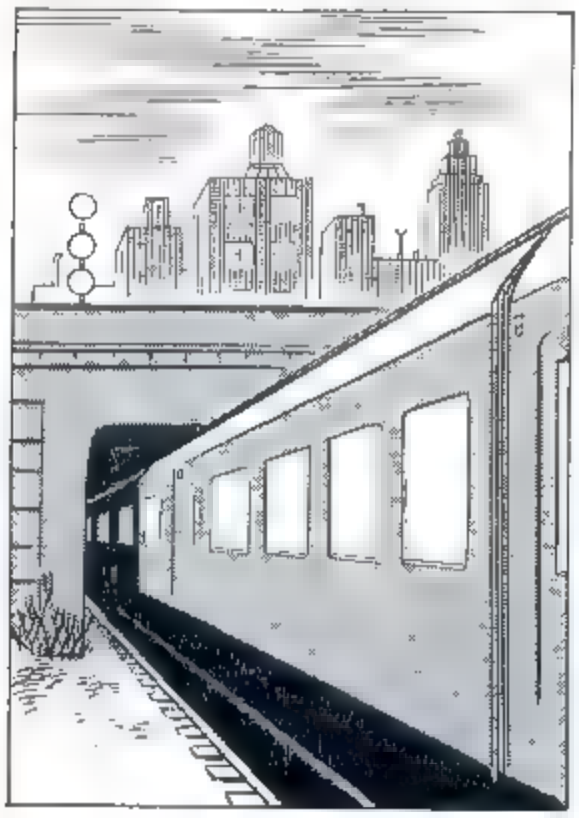


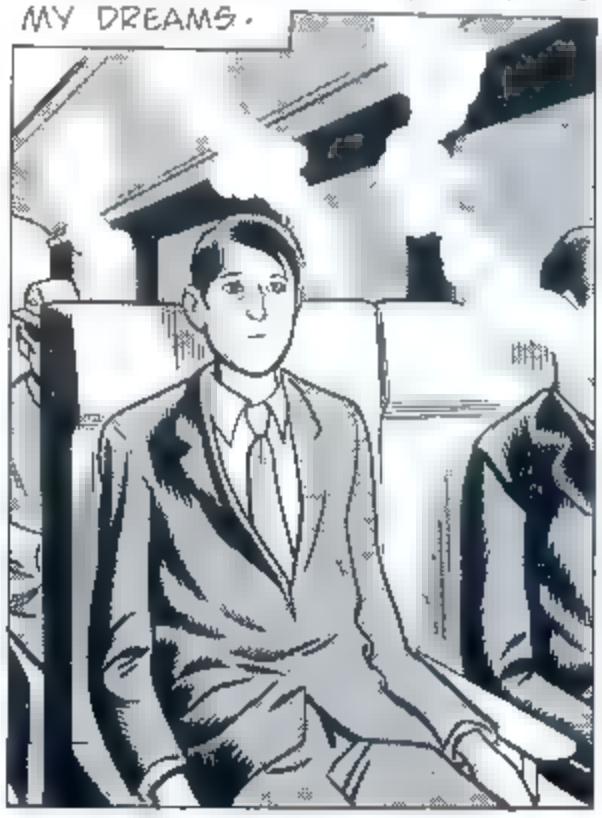


WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE? YOU HAVE TO LEAVE NOW!

I MISS YOU I HAVE TO SEE YOU..
LATER I'LL CALL YOU!

I HAVE TO GO!
PLEASE!

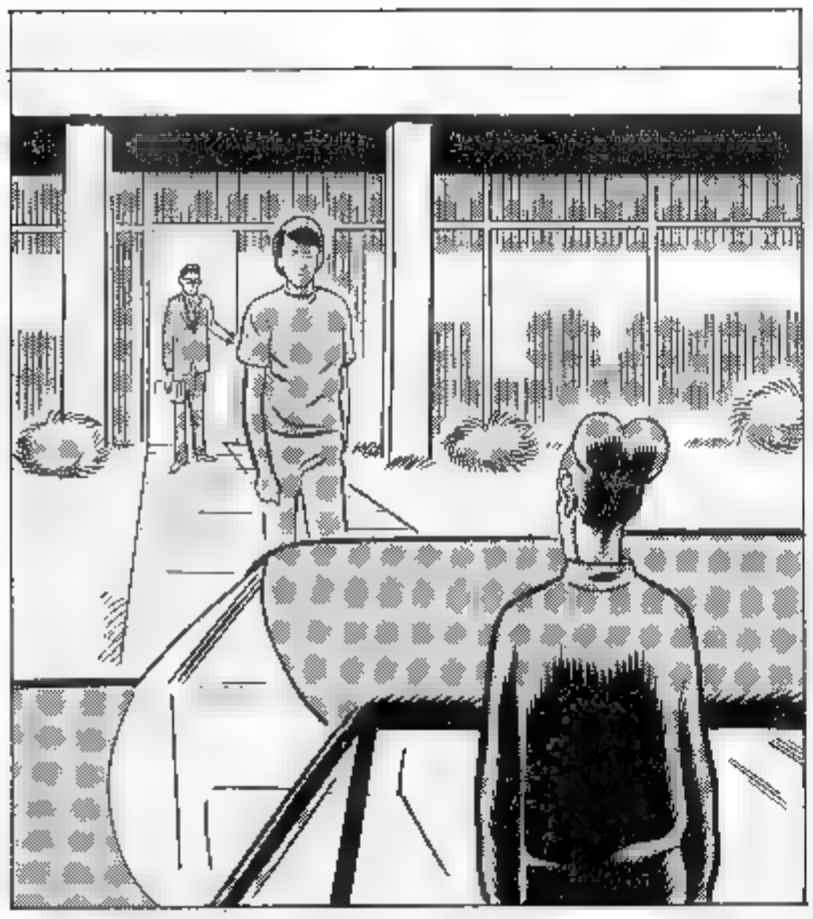

AND WHAT EXACTLY IS MY OWN TRUE NATURE? HOW AM I TO KNOW?


ONE POSITIVE INDICATOR: SINCE MEETING JUDY, THE EERIE BOY HAS STOPPED INVADING MY DREAMS.

YOU SHUT UP!

YOU LOVE ME! I HAVE EVIDENCE THAT YOU LOVE ME!
PLEASE SHUT UP!

I DON'T WANT TO BE MARRIED TO A GIRL! I'M A GIRL TOO, IN CASE YOU HAVEN'T NOTICED!

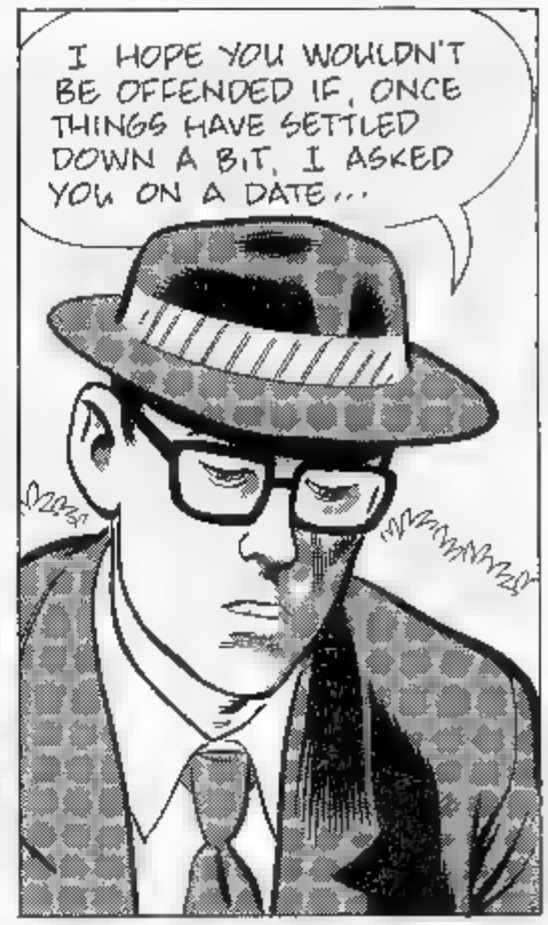


WHAT HAPPENED? ARE YOU OKAY?

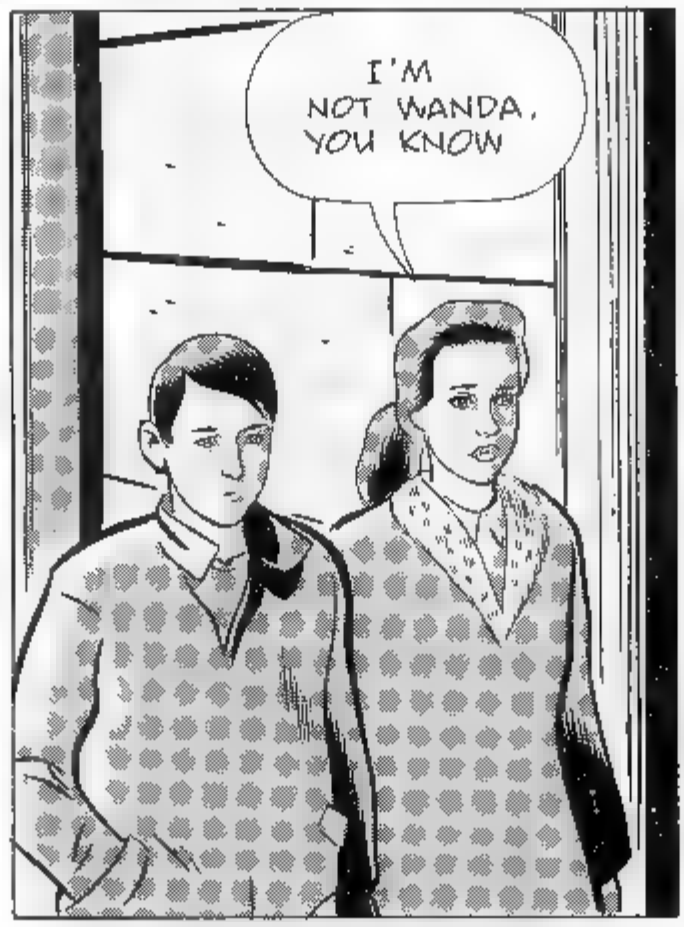
I GUESS I'M OFF THE HOOK.

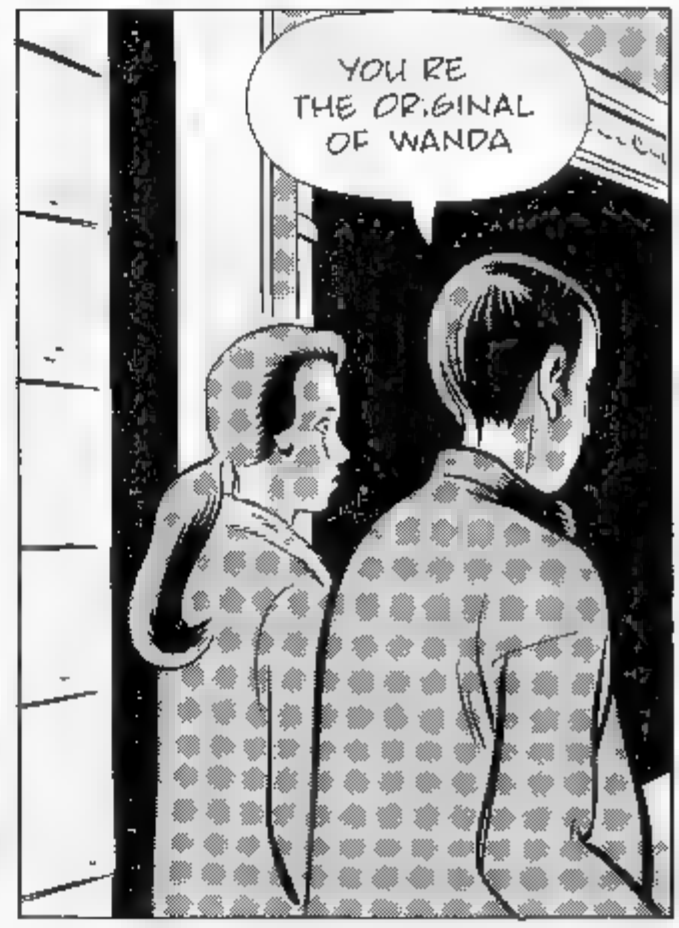
I REALLY JUST STOPPED BY TO CHECK UP ON YOU, IRIS... DO YOU MIND THAT I CALL YOU "IRIS"?
NO.

IRIS, PERHAPS THIS IS NONE OF MY BUSINESS, BUT I REALLY THINK YOU NEED TO TAKE A LOOK AT THE SITUATION YOU'RE IN RIGHT NOW... YOU'RE TOO GOOD FOR THIS SORT OF LIFESTYLE, IRIS..
I KNOW.

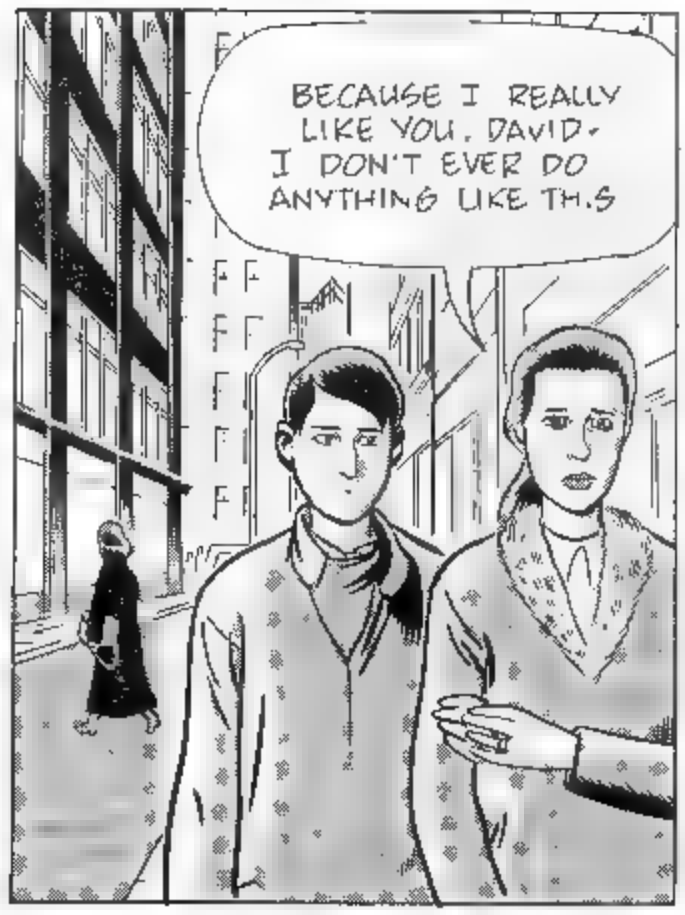

I HOPE YOU WOULDN'T BE OFFENDED IF, ONCE THINGS HAVE SETTLED DOWN A BIT, I ASKED YOU ON A DATE...

DAVID?
JUDITH?
OCEANF


I'M NOT WANDA, YOU KNOW


YOU'RE THE ORIGINAL OF WANDA

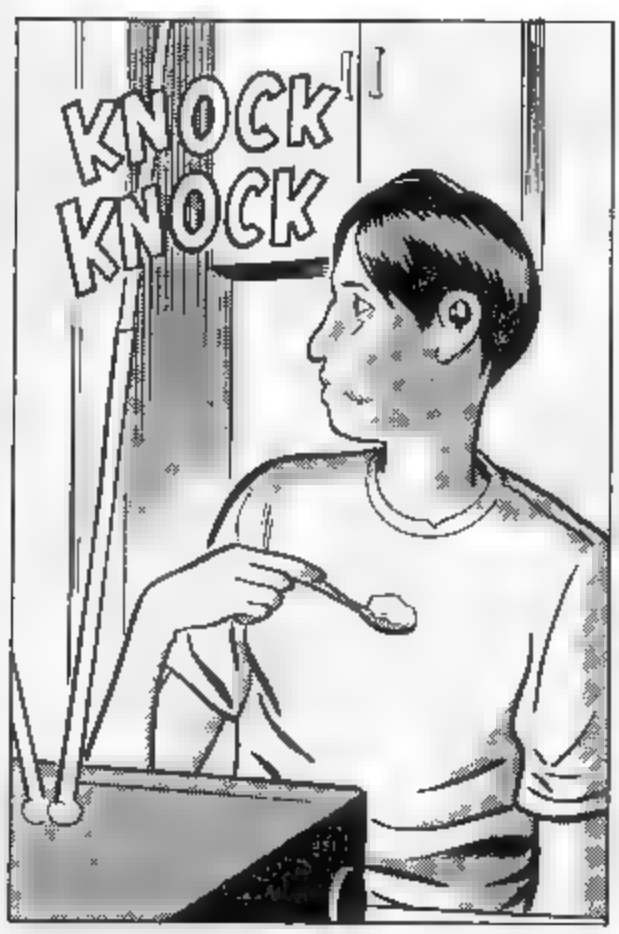
DO YOU LIKE ME AS MUCH AS HER, AT LEAST SO FAR?
YOU'RE PERFECT.

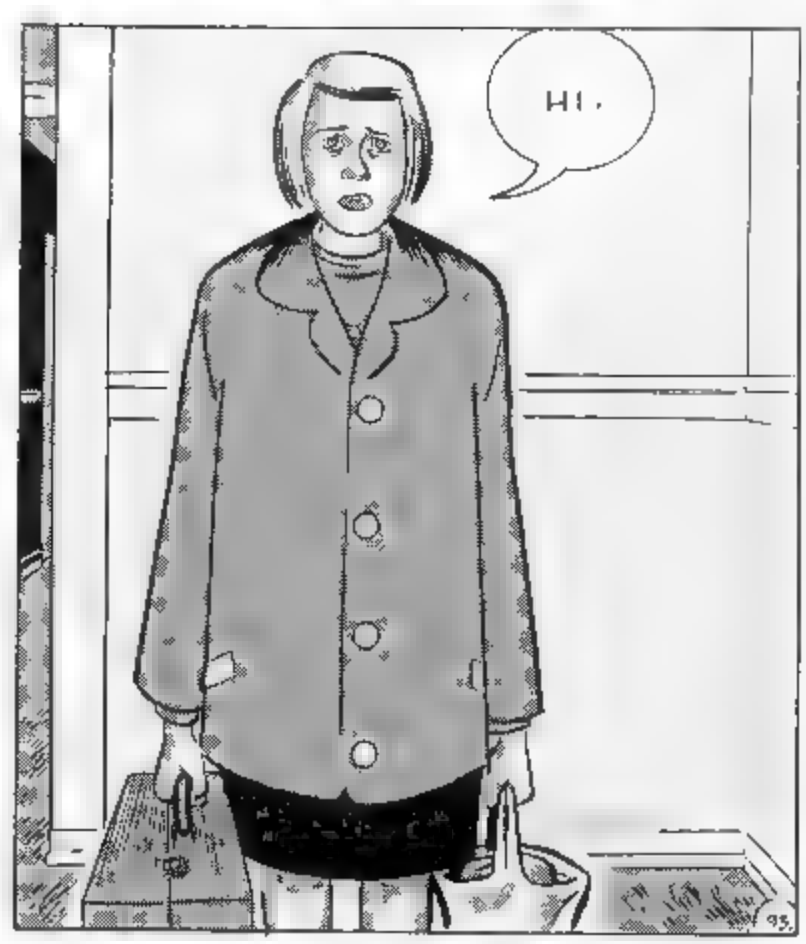

BECAUSE I REALLY LIKE YOU, DAVID. I DON'T EVER DO ANYTHING LIKE THIS

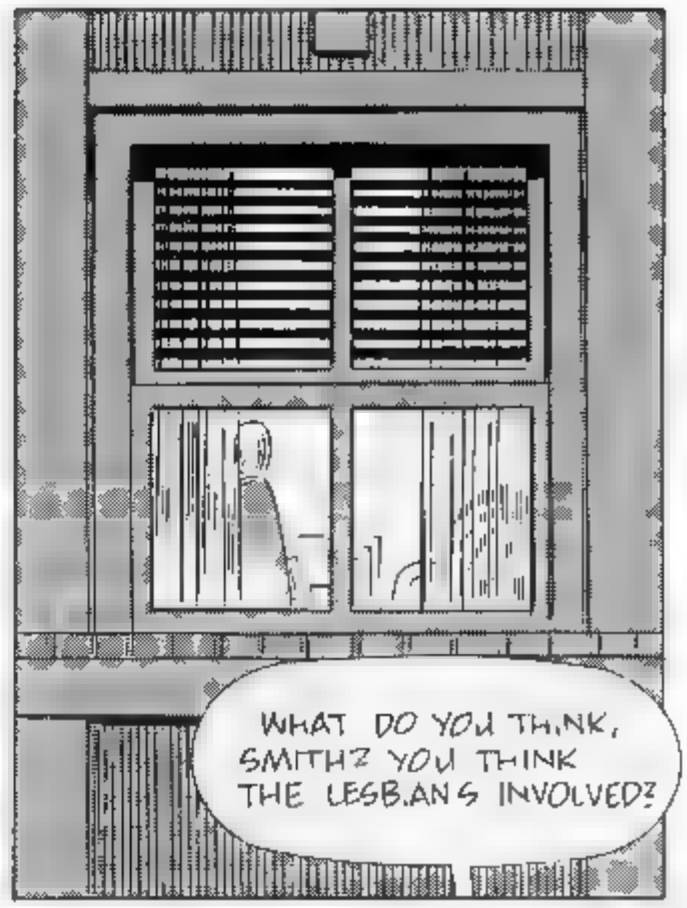
WHAT ARE WE GOING TO DO ABOUT PAUL?

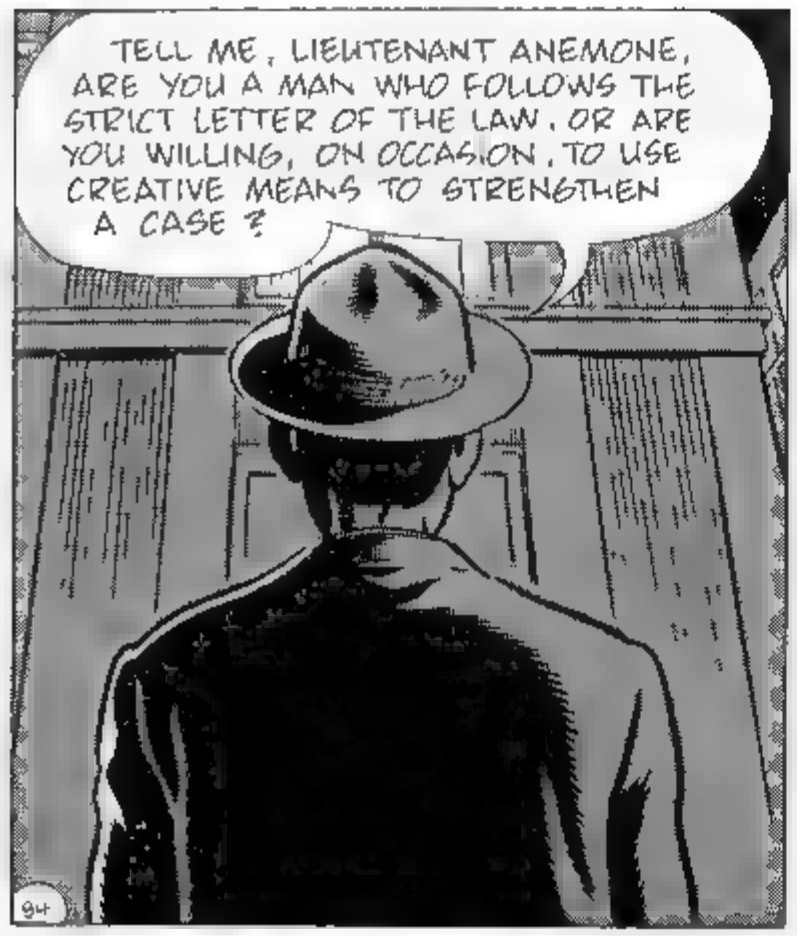
I THINK YOU BETTER KISS ME, DAVID

UP NEXT: FIND OUT WHY THIS LUCKY TURKEY GOT A LAST-MINUTE REPRIEVE, AND A THANKSGIVING LOVE STORY...


KNOCK KNOCK


HI.





HAS JUDY FULLY REPLACED HER SISTER? SO IT SEEMS...

DO I KNOW THE CORRECT ANSWER? NO BUT I MUST BE TRUE TO MY OWN NATURE.
NO
THANK GOD

ARE YOU EVER VIOLENT? HAVE YOU EVER BEEN IN THE ARMY? DO YOU GET IN FIGHTS?
NO NO. NO.

DOES IT EMBARRASS YOU TO SHOW AFFECTION IN PUBLIC?
VERY FUNNY

AM I, THE MORE MATURE DAVID BORING, STILL CAPTIVATED BY A SPECIFIC FEMININE IDEAL?
FACE IT, WE'RE PERFECT FOR EACH OTHER.

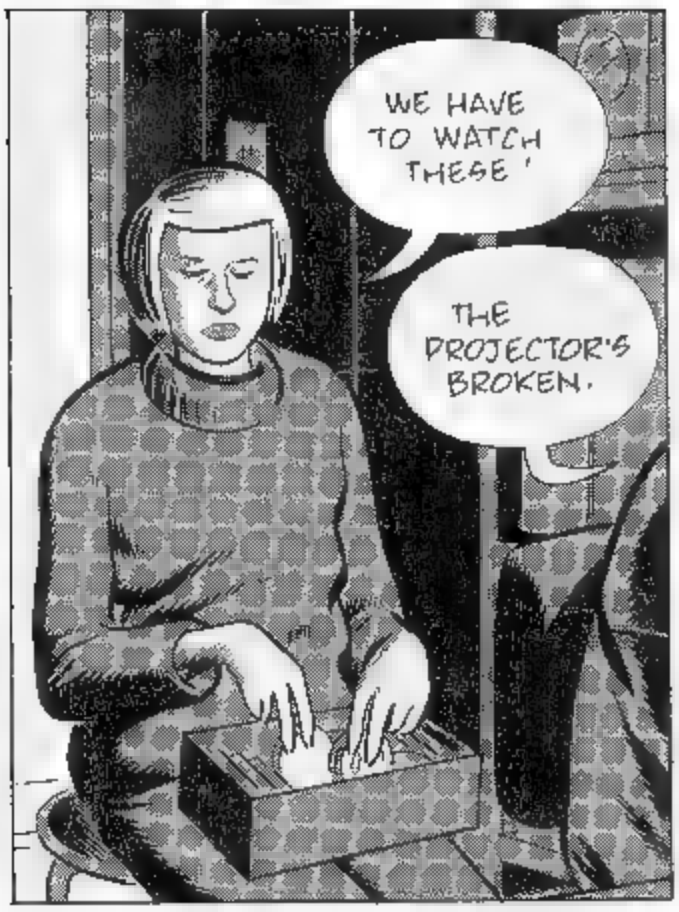
STOP, DAVID-- WE STILL HAVE TO BE CAREFUL!

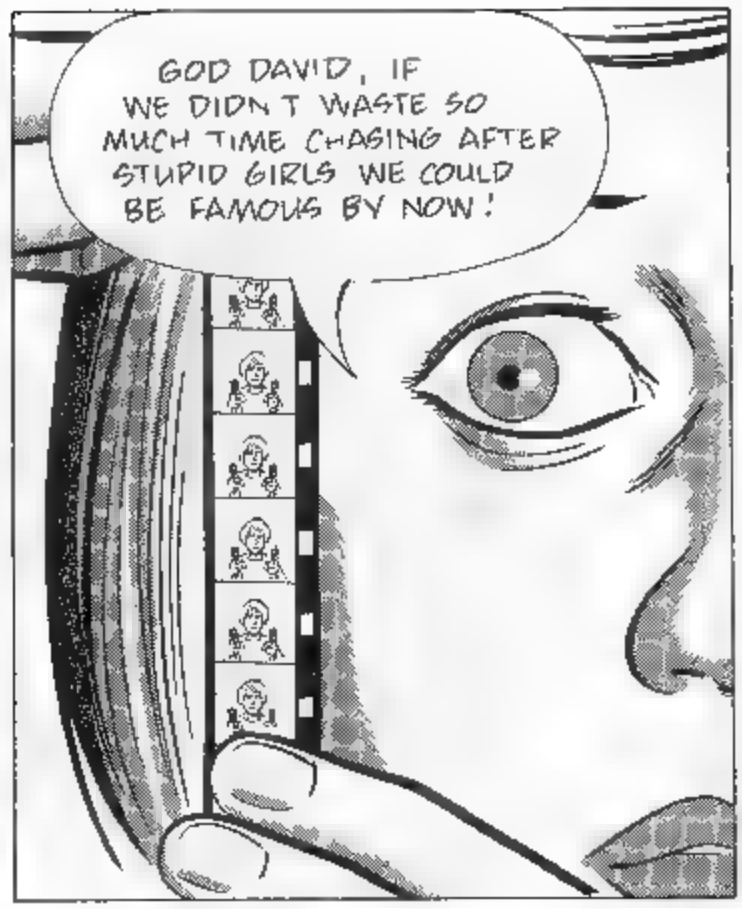
WHY DO YOU KEEP LOOKING AT THOSE?
SOB- HOW CAN YOU EVER FORGIVE ME?
IT'S TIME TO THE HAG A TA OF HER OWN MEDICINE!

THERE'S NOTHING THERE DAVID
I M NOT SO SURE

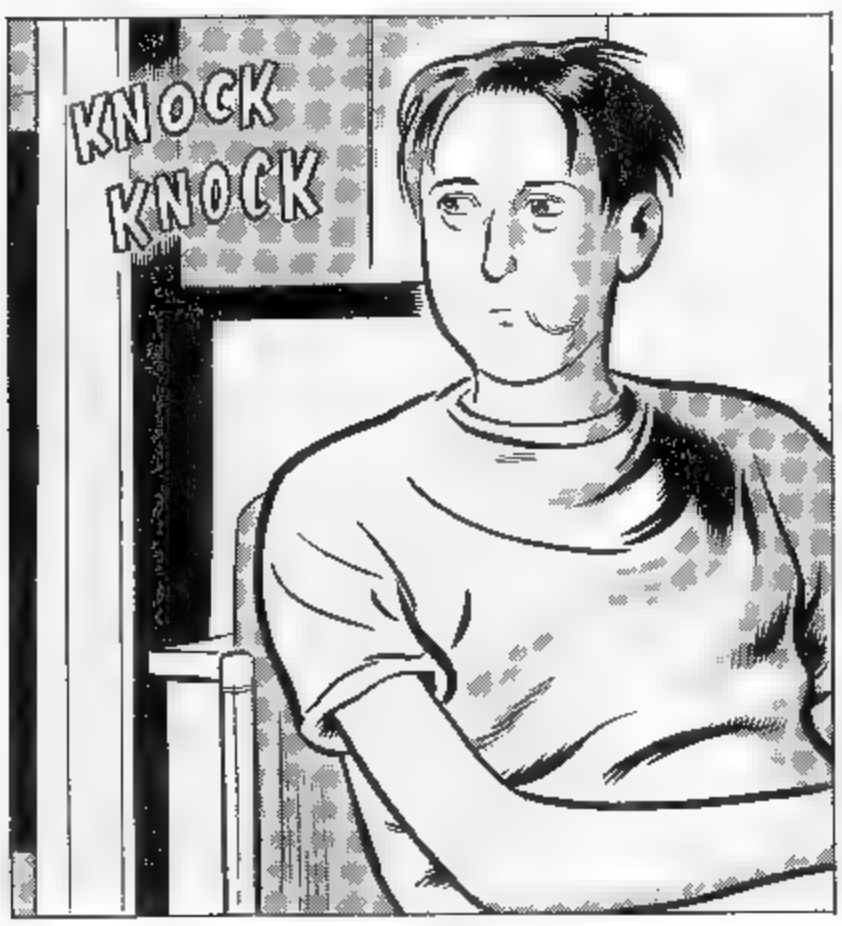
IF I CAN'T HAVE YOU, NOBODY CAN!
HEY!

ARE THOSE OUR OLD MOVES?

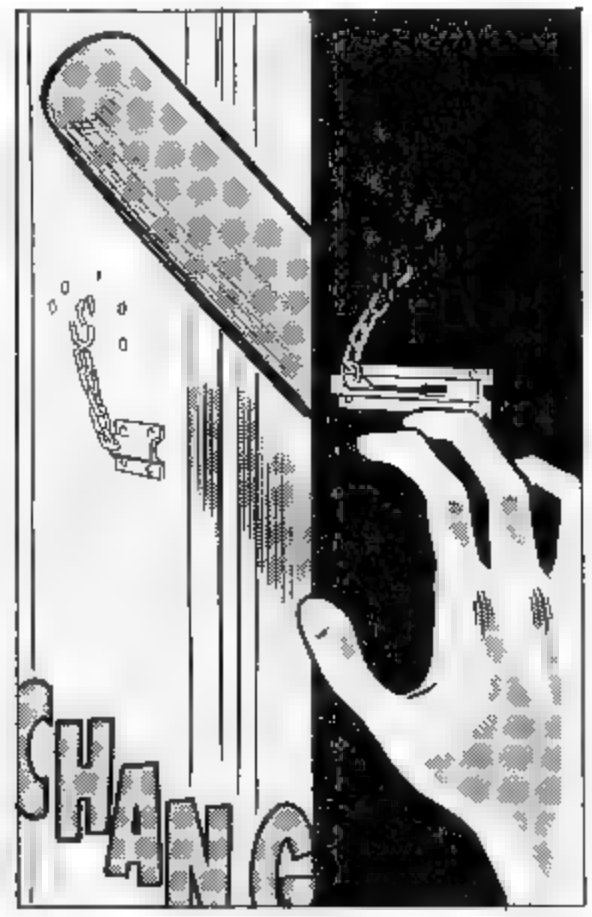

WE HAVE TO WATCH THESE!
THE PROJECTOR'S BROKEN.

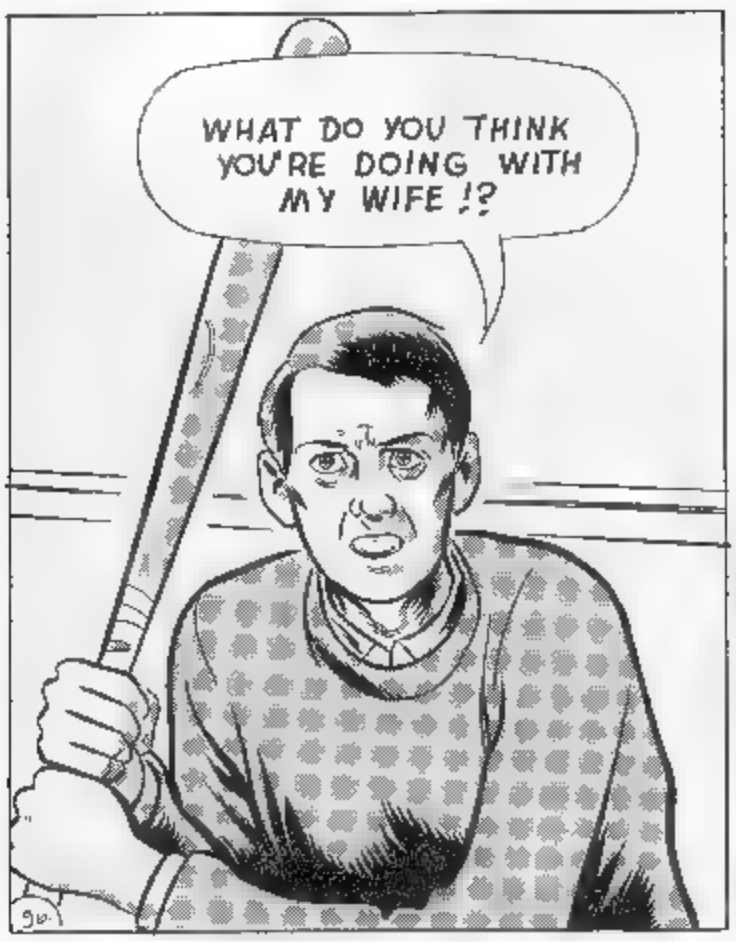

GOD DAVID, IF WE DIDN'T WASTE SO MUCH TIME CHASING AFTER STUPID GIRLS WE COULD BE FAMOUS BY NOW!

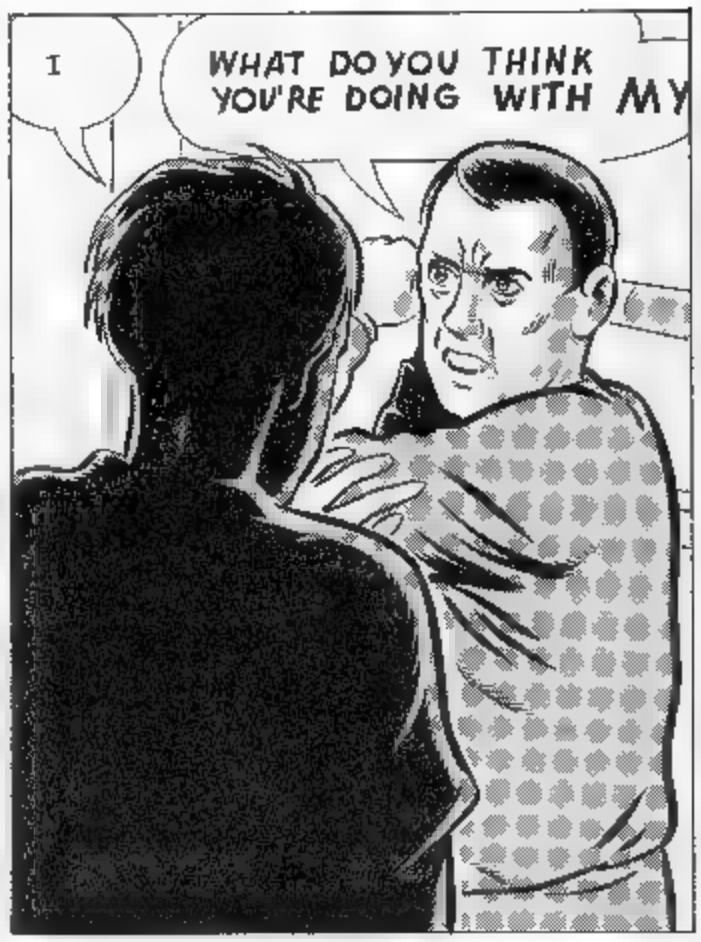
CHOMP

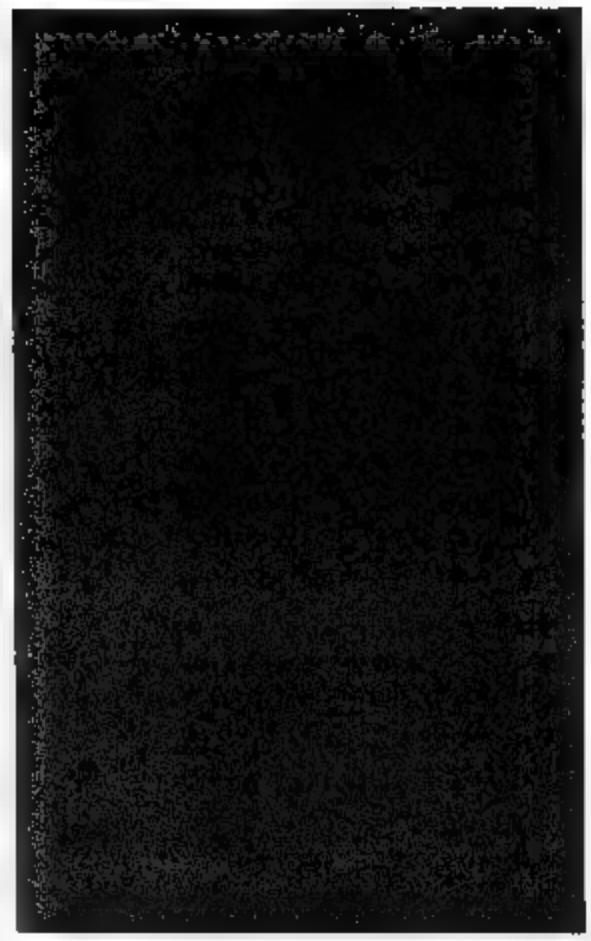

KNOCK KNOCK

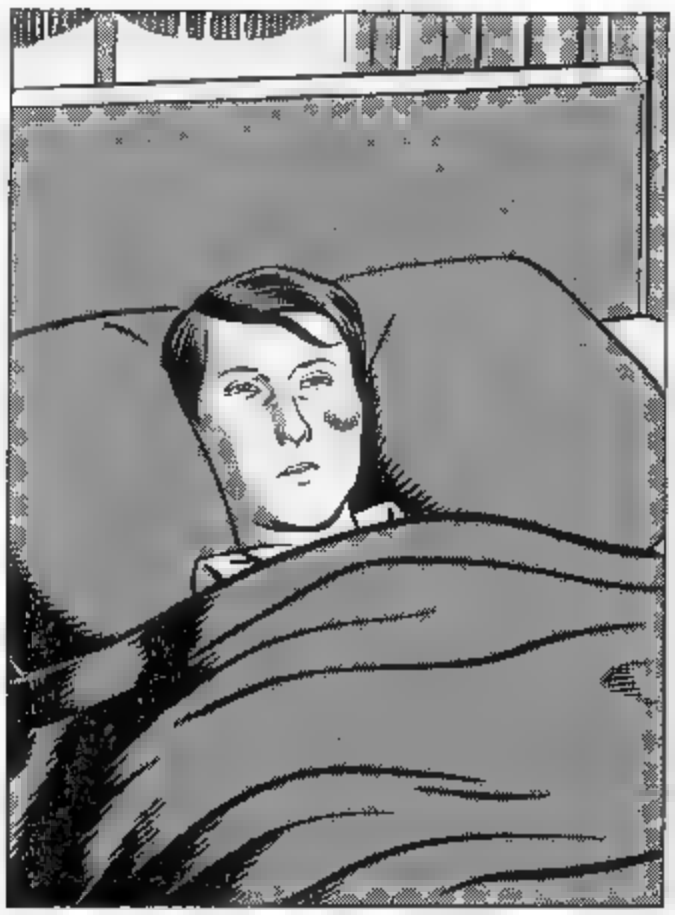
JUST A MINUTE...
SKRITCH

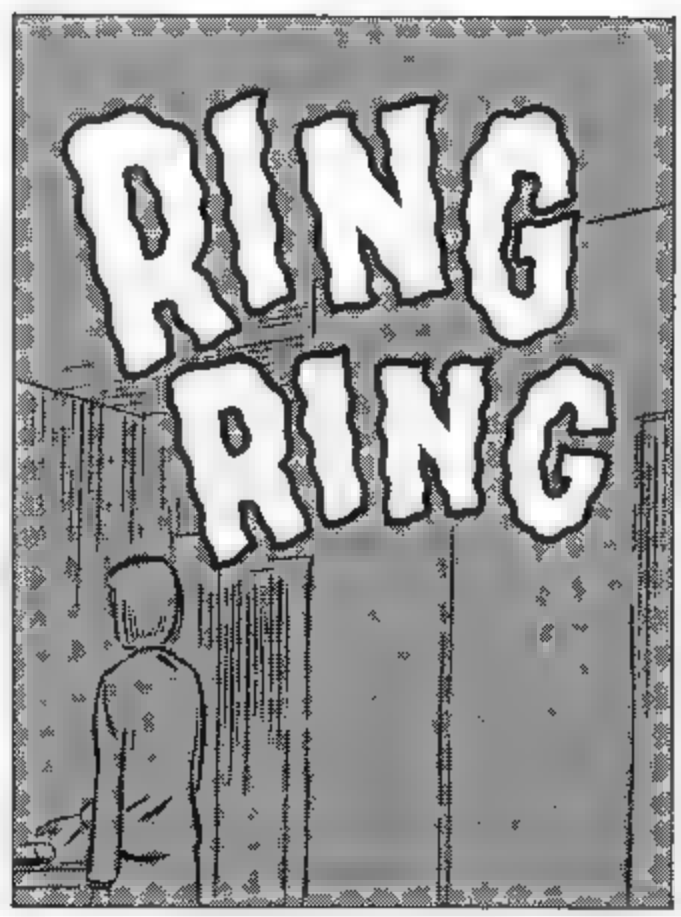

SHANG

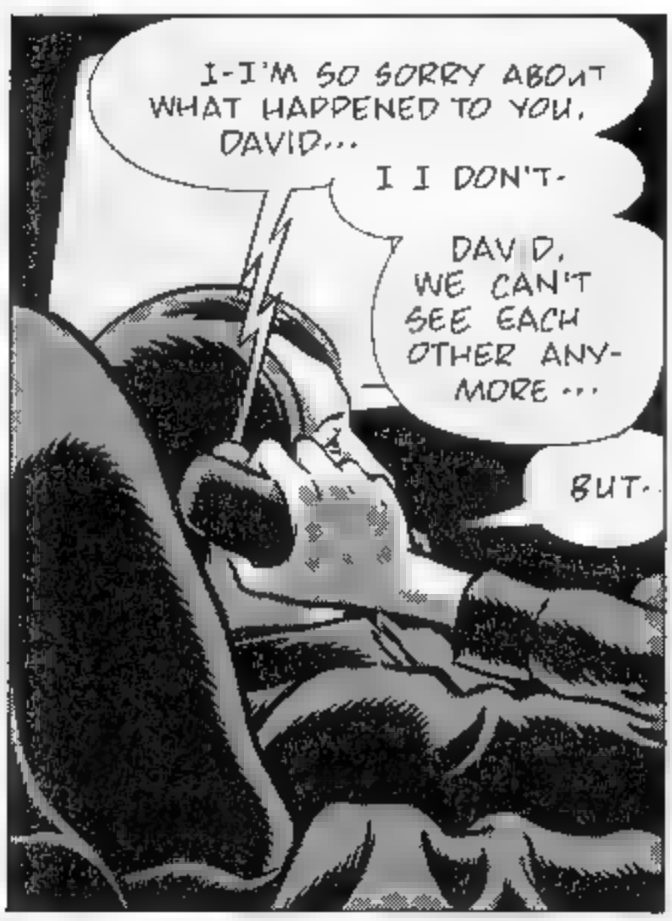

WHAT DO YOU THINK YOU'RE DOING WITH MY WIFE!?

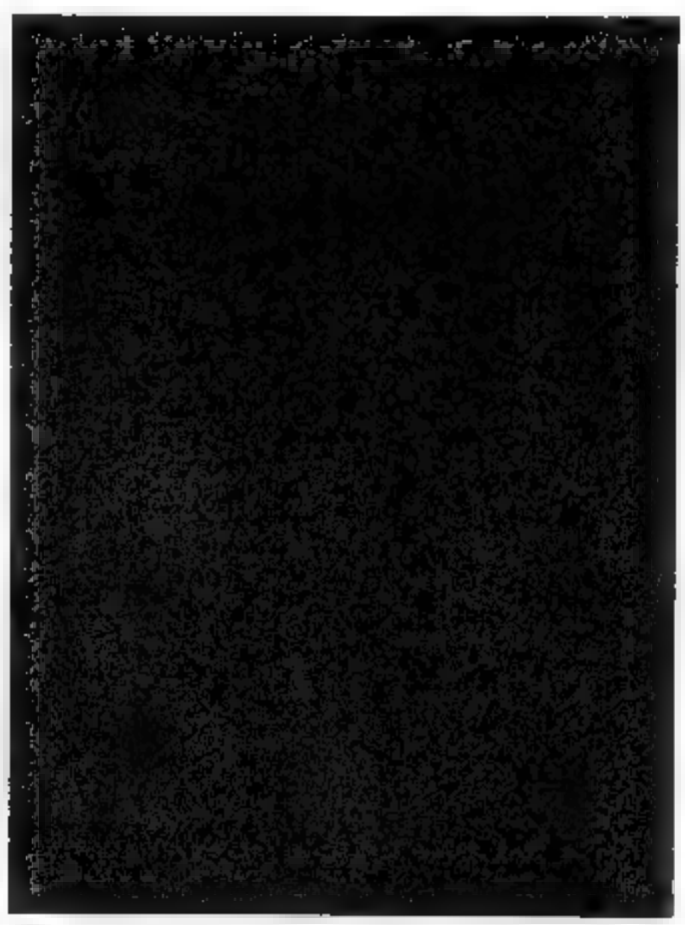

I
WHAT DO YOU THINK YOU'RE DOING WITH MY





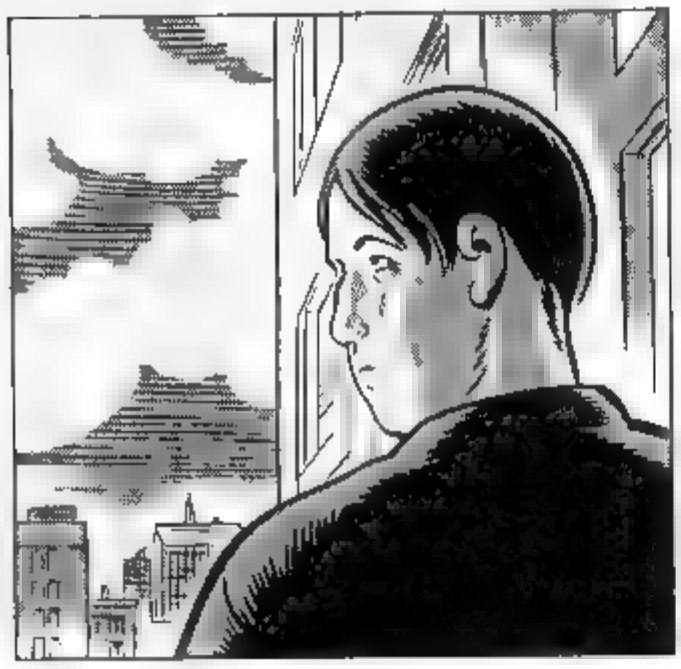




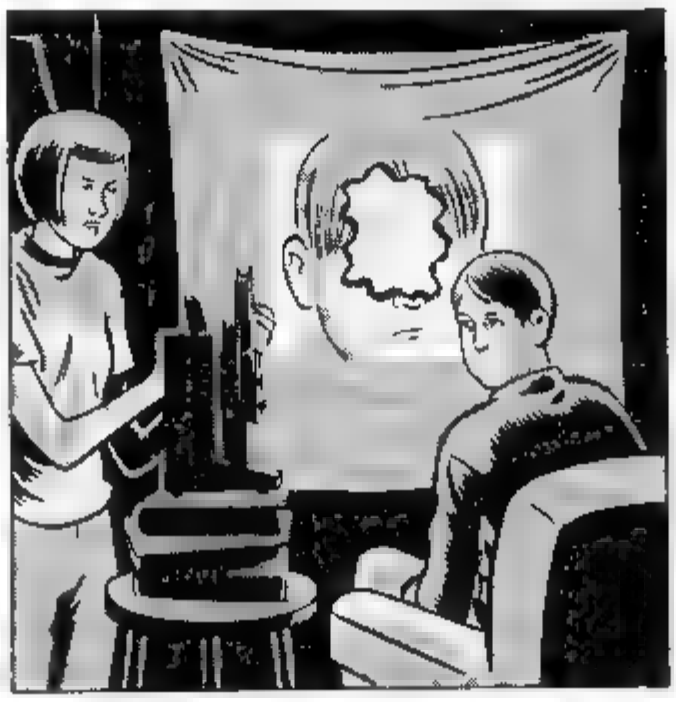


MY POST-RECOVERY FOLLOW-UP CALL ON THE MORNING OF 12/11 YIELDED THE FOLLOWING: "PLEASE DAVID, I NEED TO WORK THINGS OUT ON MY OWN." "IF YOU RESPECT ME YOU'LL GIVE ME SOME TIME." "I'LL CALL YOU WHEN I'M READY. OH GOD OH GOD."

IN MY DESPONDENCY OVER THE JUDY SITUATION, DOT HAS ME HALF-CONVINCED THAT THE COPS REALLY ARE AFTER ME. I HAD SEX WITH MRS. CAPON THE NIGHT BEFORE SHE DIED. ALL THEY NEED IS ONE SMALL SAMPLE TO NAIL ME, RIGHT?



WE TRY TO WATCH OUR OLD MOVIES, BUT THE PROJECTOR, AS PREDICTED, FAILS. I AM INSPIRED, HOWEVER, BY THE EVIDENCE OF DORMANT CREATIVE PROMISE, TO WORK ON MY SCRIPT AGAIN.



THE MORE I STRAIN TO COME UP WITH SOMETHING, THOUGH, THE MORE I MUST RECALL THAT ALL THE GOOD IDEAS WERE DOT'S.

INSTEAD, I FIND MYSELF TRYING TO FORGE A NARRATIVE SEQUENCE OUT OF THE REMAINING YELLOW STREAK PANELS THAT WILL SUGGEST, AND POSSIBLY EVEN ENGENDER, A SATISFYING RESOLUTION TO MY TROUBLES.

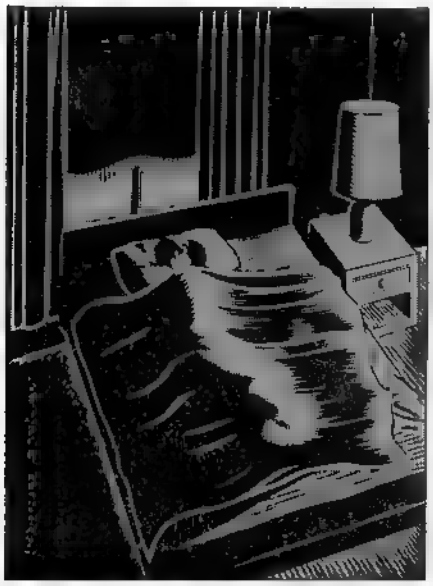
I QUIT MY JOB, BY THE WAY... QUITE A WHILE AGO, ACTUALLY... WE ARE NOW MAKING OUR LIVING BY SELLING NAOMI'S RARE BOOKS ON THE INTERNET.

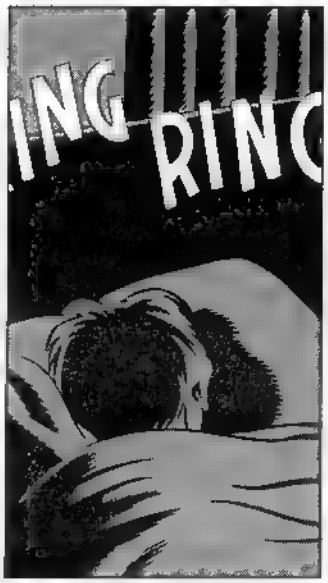
THIS LEAVES ME WITH PLENTY OF TIME TO DEVOTE TO MY LITTLE HOBBY.

HER NAME IS BARBARA SHE WORKS AS A NANNY, SHE SAYS. HOW MANY OF THE CHILDREN IN HER CARE WILL DEVELOP BUTT OBSESSIONS?

THE FAMILY SHE WORKS FOR IS IN MONTANA AND SHE HAS THE HOUSE TO HERSELF. SO WHAT AM I WAITING FOR? IT'S NOT BECAUSE OF JUDY, EXACTLY. I'M PERFECTLY ABLE TO SEPARATE SEX FROM LOVE.

I WATCH HER CAREFULLY, LOOKING FOR SOME TINY GESTURE OR INDICATION. WHAT DOES SHE WANT? IS SHE WORKING FOR THE POLICE? DOES SHE ONLY WANT MY SPERM? I CAN'T LET MYSELF FALL IN TO HER TRAP.

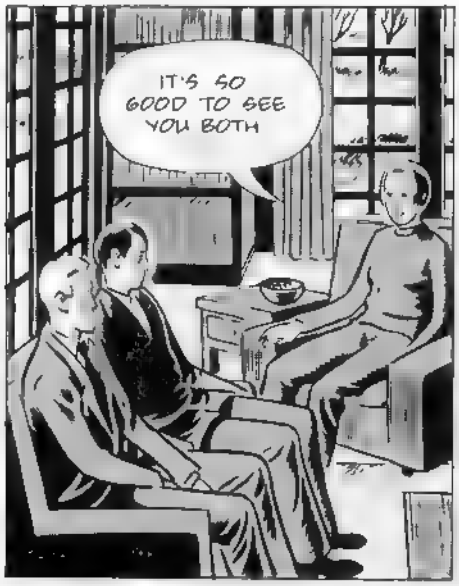




PURCELL HOWE P.I., HAD DONE HIS JOB. WANDA HAD TURNED UP IN A GROUP HOME 60 MILES SOUTH OF OCEANA. THE BOOK ON HER COFFEE TABLE (MY UNIVERSE, AS YOU WILL RECALL, BY DEACON ELLIS) HAD PROVEN TO BE THE CASE-BREAKING CLUE.

APPARENTLY SHE BELONGS TO A SMALL COMMUNITY FORMED BY FOLLOWERS OF THE GREAT BOOK. "MR HOWE WAS VERY CAREFUL NOT TO USE THE WORD CULT," SAYS KARKES.

THERE SHE WAS, ALL RIGHT. THE APOCALYPTIC HAIR DO OF 1998 HAD BEEN RESTRUCTURED BUT SHE WAS CERTAINLY RECOGNIZABLE. I COULD ONLY THINK OF HER PROGENITOR, PAMELA, GREETING GUESTS AT MY UNCLE'S FUNERAL.



EVIDENTLY, SHE IS THE ONLY ONE HERE. "EVERYONE ELSE HAS CROSSED OVER" SHE SAYS WITHOUT ELABORATION

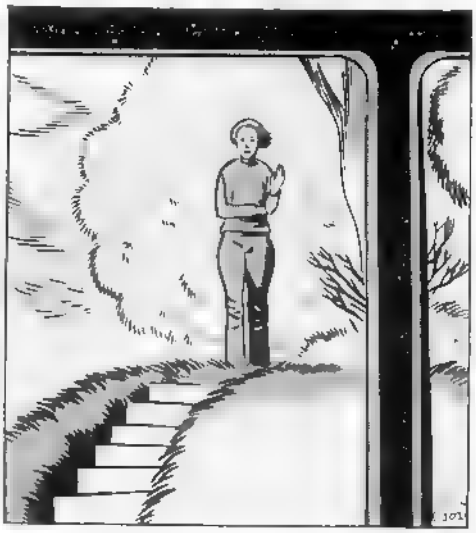
SISTER JUDY'S MANNERISMS ARE APPARENT IN EVERY INFLECTION, TO THE POINT THAT IT BECOMES UNBEARABLE TO LOOK AT HER INSTEAD I FIX MY GAZE ON A SERIES OF PATHETIC FURNISHINGS.

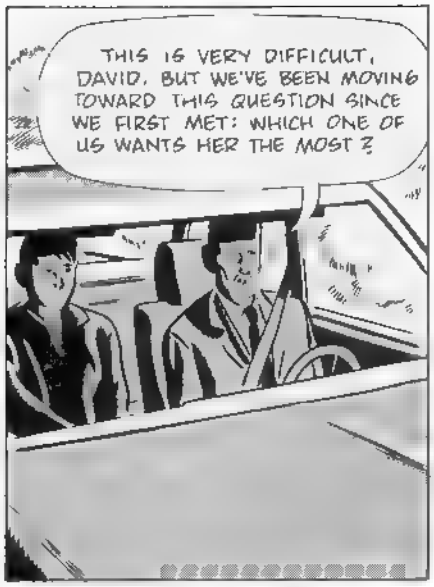
THE LENGTHY DISCUSSION OF HER RELIGION IS IMPOSSIBLE FOR ME TO FOLLOW, BUT KARKES HAS DONE HIS HOMEWORK, AND SPEAKS WITHOUT A HINT OF CONDESCENSION

EVENTUALLY, SHE GETS TO THE PART ABOUT HAVING SEX WITH GOD, AND ALL THAT.. I HAVE TO ADMIT SHE DOESN'T REALLY SEEM CRAZY, EXACTLY... MAYBE SHE'S ON TO SOMETHING.

WHAT IF I WAS GOD, AND SOMEWHERE ON THIS LITTLE WORLD WAS A TINY FLECK WHO WANTED TO BE MY GIRLFRIEND?

AND IF GOD WERE TO SELECT A FLECK FROM THIS WORLD, HE COULD DO MUCH WORSE THAN POOR WANDA..

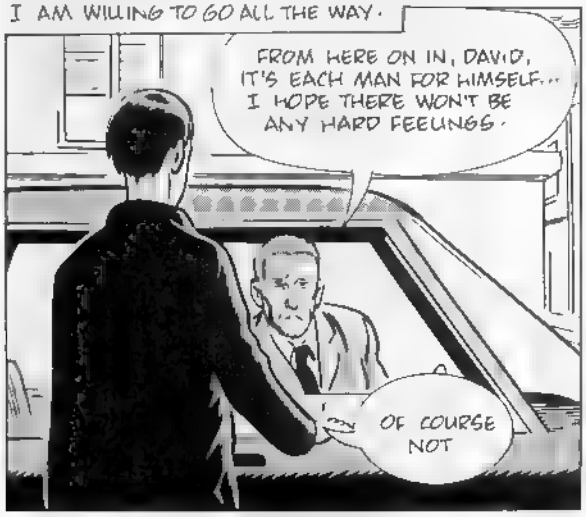




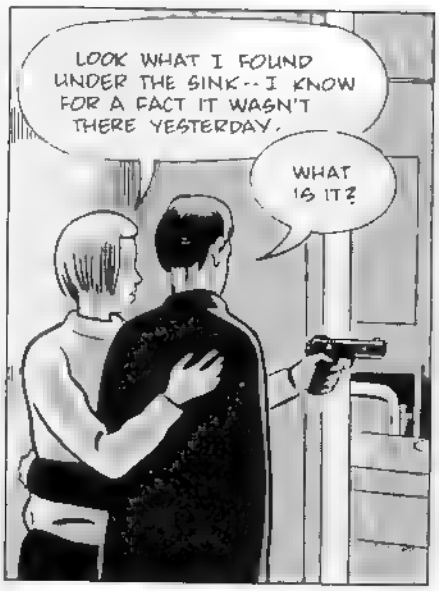
HE DID; THERE WAS NO QUESTION ABOUT THAT. I WAS ONLY INTERESTED IN JUDY, THE ONE THING IN THE WORLD THAT I WAS ABSOLUTELY CERTAIN ABOUT AT THAT MOMENT WAS THAT I HAD TO HAVE JUDY. SO WHY NOT JUST TELL HIM AND PART WAYS AMICABLY?

BECAUSE I WANT TO KEEP HIM GUESSING BECAUSE, AS MUCH AS I HATE TO ADMIT IT, I CAN'T STAND TO LOSE THIS DIABOLICAL CONTEST BECAUSE, REALLY, I'M JUST AS BAD AS HE IS..

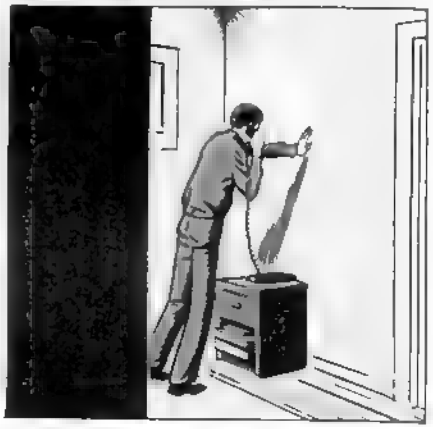
AND IF I COULD ONLY GET JUDY, AS OPPOSED TO HER FADING IMITATOR, I COULD BEAT THE OLD FUCKER AND HE WOULDN'T EVEN KNOW IT. AND YES, I AM WILLING TO GO ALL THE WAY.



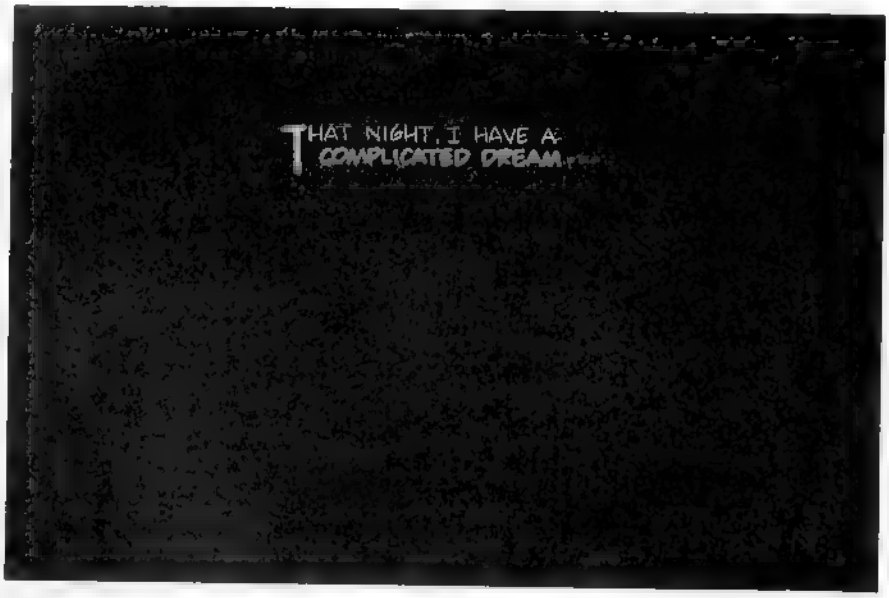
PLEASE UNDERSTAND, HOWEVER THAT I TRULY LOVE JUDY WITH ALL MY HEART AS A SPECIFIC INDIVIDUAL, AND NOT JUST FOR HER SYMBOLIC VALUE.



I CAN'T WAIT AROUND FOR A BURST OF INSPIRATION; I HAVE TO DO WHATEVER I CAN TO GET JUDY TO MEET WITH ME. SHE AGREES TO TALK TO ME, BUT HER FLAT, SECRETARIAL INFLECTION OFFERS NO HINT OF HER INTENTIONS



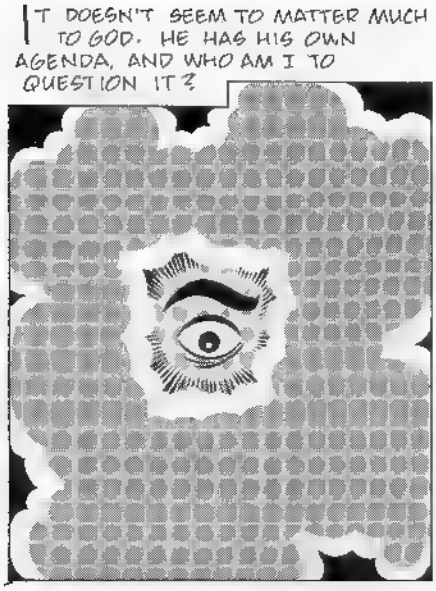
SHE SAYS SHE'LL SEE ME IN PERSON TOMORROW AFTERNOON (THURSDAY THE 30TH). SHE'S MEETING HER HUSBAND IN THE CITY TO SEE A PLAY, BUT SHE'LL TAKE AN EARLIER TRAIN. THIS WILL BE MY ONE BIG CHANCE.

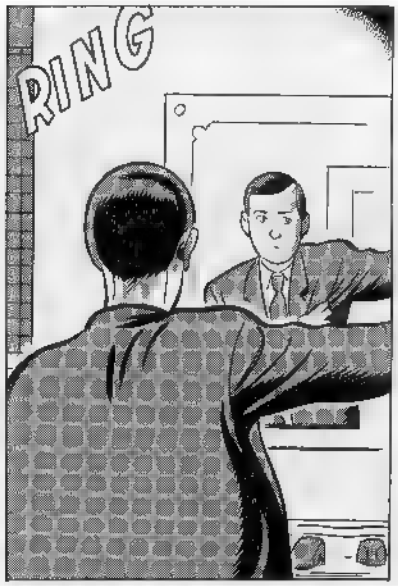


FIRST, I WATCH AS WHITEY'S HEAD IS CRUSHED BY A GIANT THUMB FROM THE SKY.

IT BELONGS TO GOD WHO LOOKS DOWN IMPATIENTLY, AS THOUGH WAITING FOR ME TO DO SOMETHING THAT WILL HOLD HIS INTEREST.

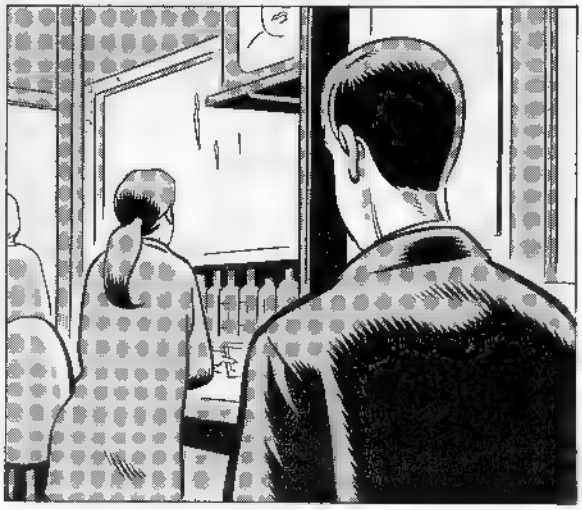
I PLEAD FOR JUST ONE WISH, AND IF HE WOULD GRANT ME THAT WISH, I WOULD NEVER ASK FOR ANYTHING AGAIN. AT FIRST, I DON'T WANT TO MENTION JUDY'S NAME, BUT IT OCCURS TO ME THAT HE CAN READ MY MIND SO I GO AHEAD WITH IT





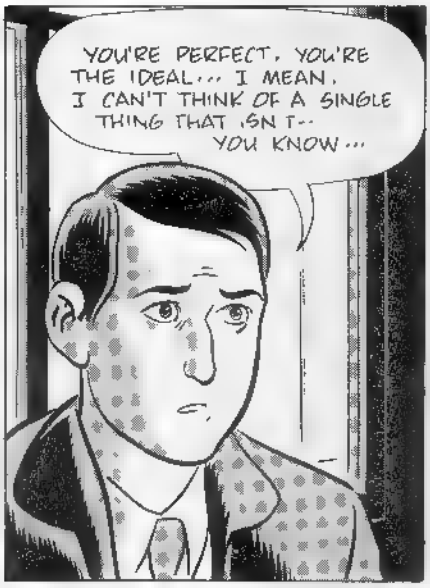
HOW DID WANDA KNOW I WAS LEAVING? WAS SHE IN WITH THE COPS? I KNEW THEY WERE WATCHING THE APARTMENT SO I LEFT WITHOUT EVEN A SUITCASE.

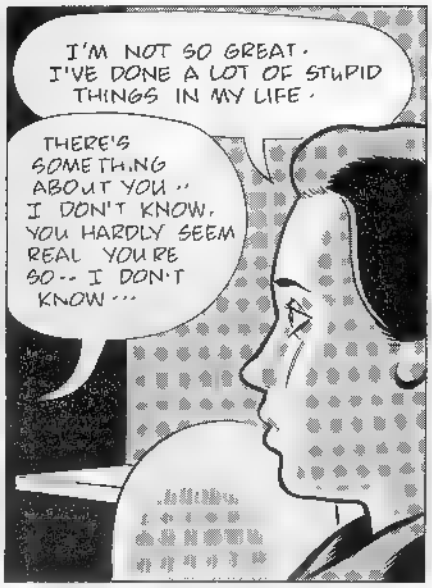
IF ALL WENT ACCORDING TO PLAN, JUDY AND I WOULD TAKE THE NEXT TRAIN OUT OF TOWN. WE COULD GO WHEREVER SHE WANTED, AND BUY WHATEVER WE NEEDED WHEN WE GOT THERE.

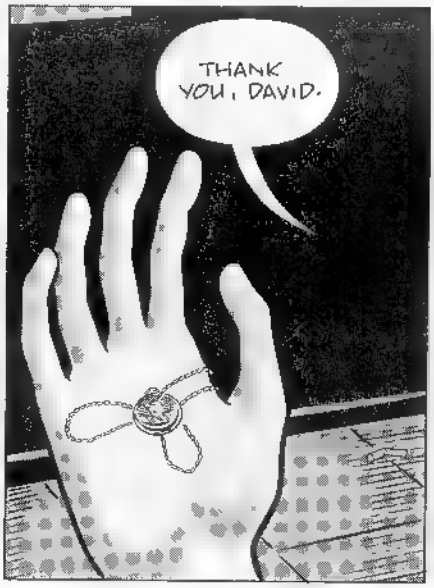


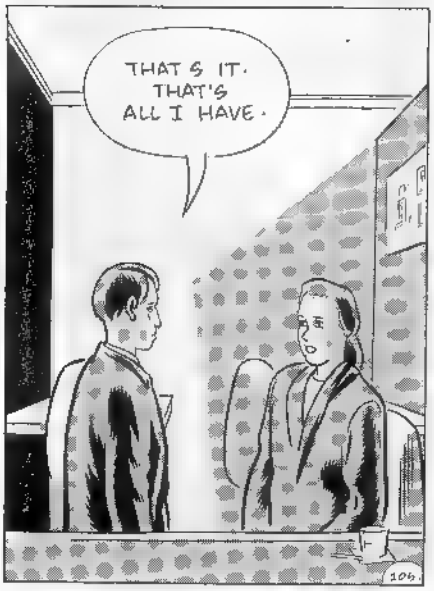
I HAVE TO BELIEVE IN THE UNASSAILABLE BEAUTY OF MY INTENTIONS IF I'M GOING TO CONVINCE HER OF ANYTHING

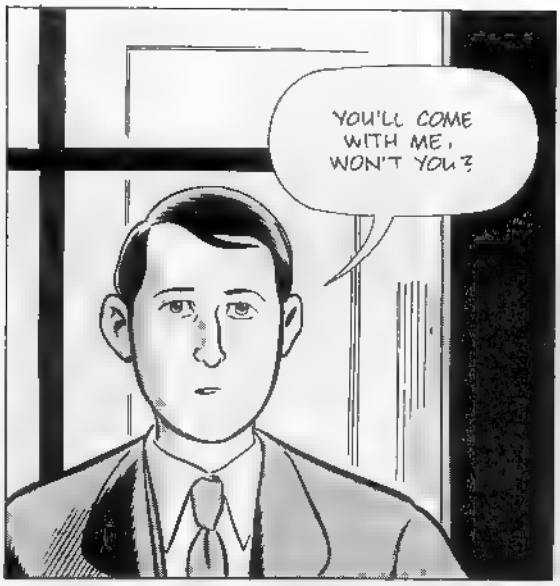
I TELL HER, WITH PRACTICED CANDOR THAT I HAVE TO BE WITH HER OR I WILL SURELY DIE, THAT I LOVE AND WORSHIP HER AND WOULD HAPPILY DO ANYTHING SHE ASKED OF ME IF IT MEANT THAT I COULD BE WITH HER FOR EVEN ONE DAY.



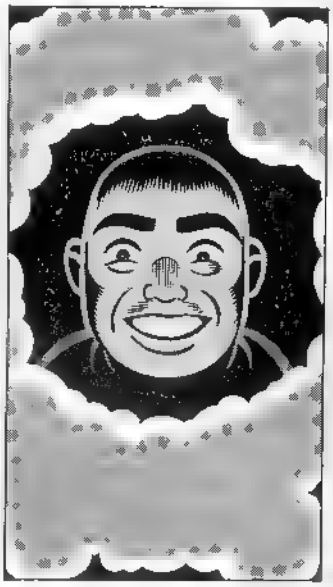







YOU'LL COME WITH ME, WON'T YOU?

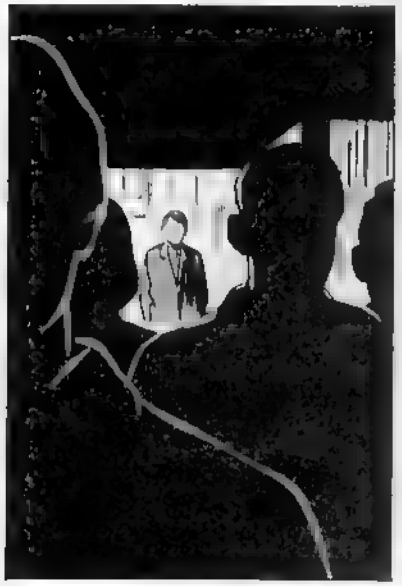
NO, I'M SORRY, DAVID, I REALLY CAN'T.

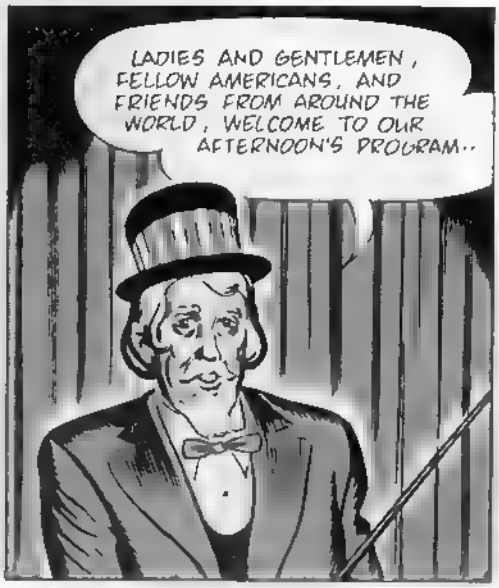


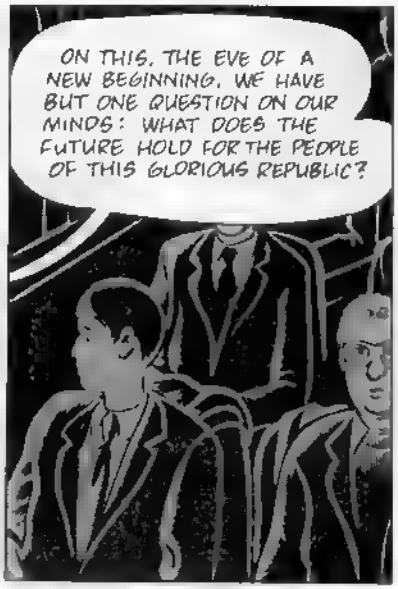
HI.
DAVID?

I'M GOING TO JUMP OFF THE OCEANA-HERCULES BRIDGE.
WAIT RIGHT THERE, DAVID I HAVE A PLAN..

DAVID, WAIT.

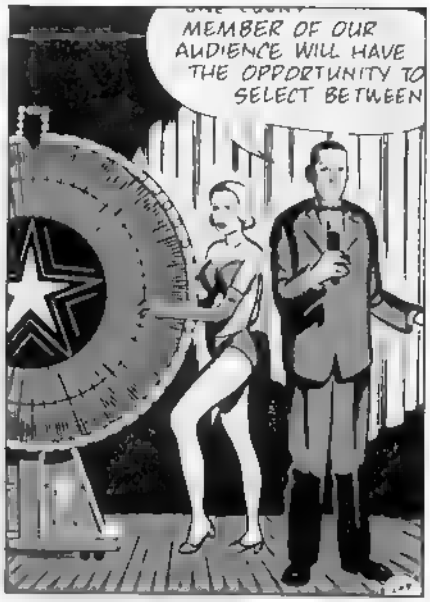




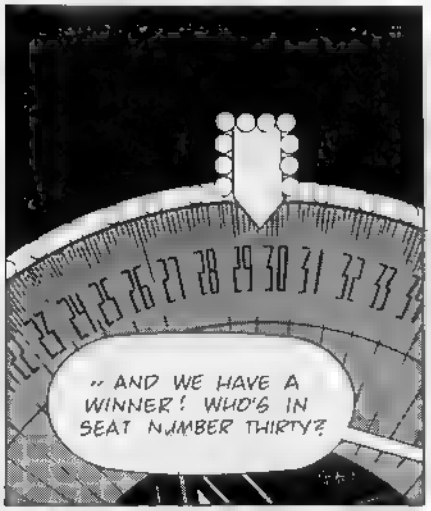


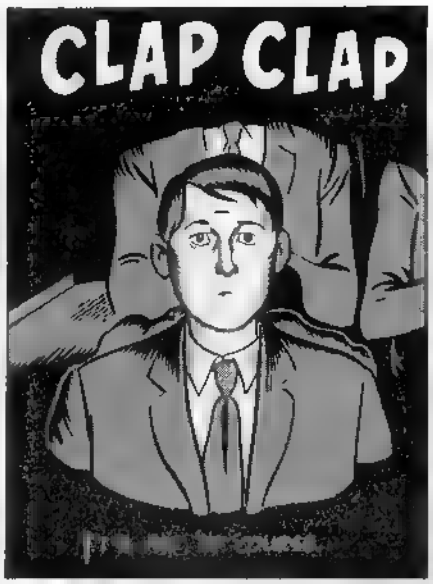
WHAT FOLLOWS IS A VAUDEVILLE-STYLE VARIETY SHOW: A SERIES OF ACTS (MAGICIAN, PLATE-SPINNER) ALL TAKEN ENTIRELY AT FACE-VALUE BY AN AUDIENCE INTENT ON EULOGIZING THE IMAGINED INNOCENCE OF A MORIBUND CENTURY.

AND WHAT ABOUT JUDY? WHERE IS MY JUDY? IS SHE HAVING SECOND THOUGHTS, OR HAS SHE ALREADY FORGOTTEN ABOUT ME?

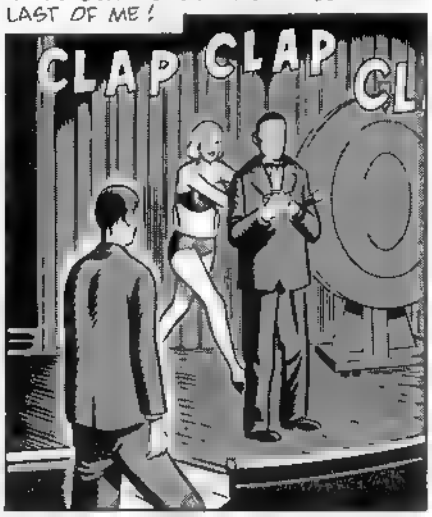


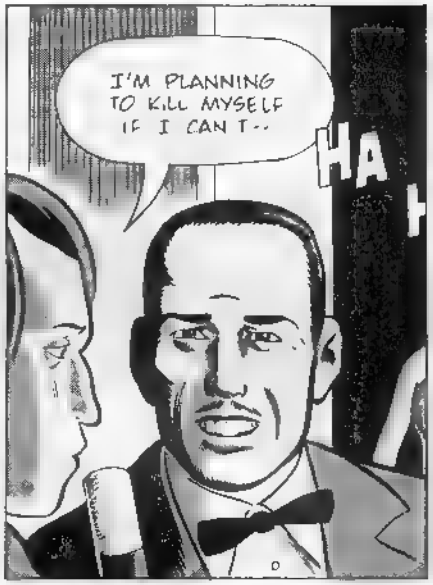
THE PERFORMERS ALL SEEM FAMILIAR TO ME. ESPECIALLY THE GIRL... WHERE HAVE I SEEN HER?



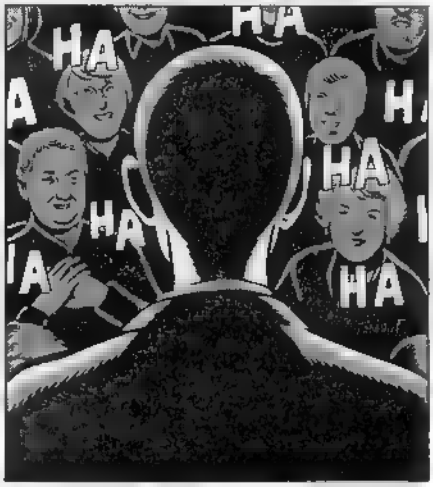


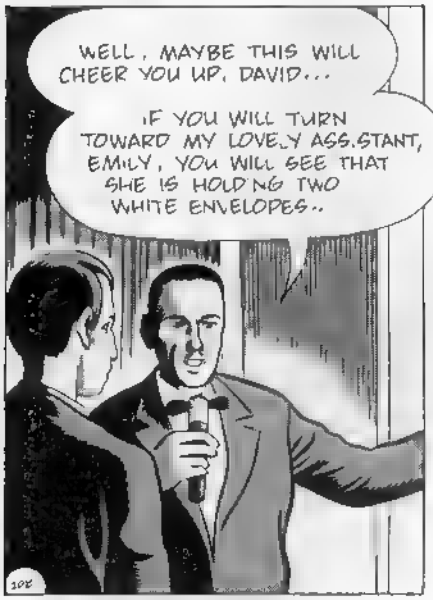
I STAND UP AUTOMATICALLY, TOO QUICKLY, SO THAT I NEARLY PASS OUT. JUDY HASN'T SEEN THE LAST OF ME!





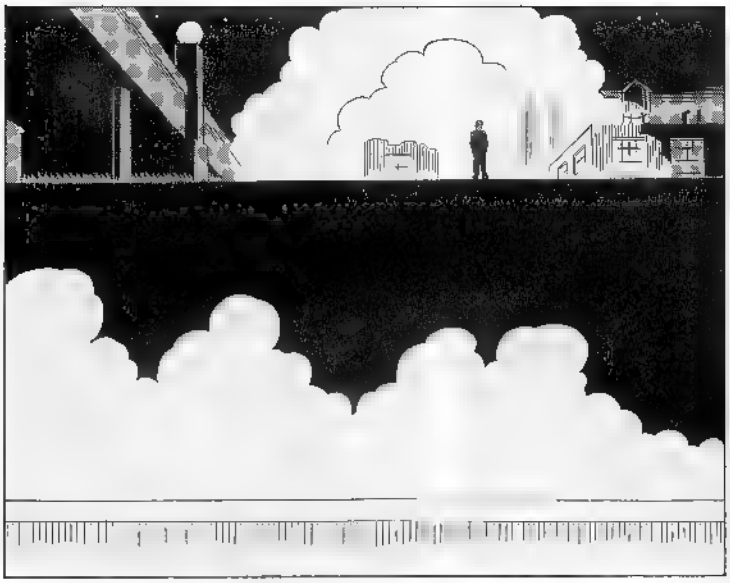
I CAN'T FINISH MY ANSWER. THEY LOVE ME. WHERE ARE YOU, JUDY? WHAT COULD YOU POSSIBLY BE THINKING RIGHT NOW?

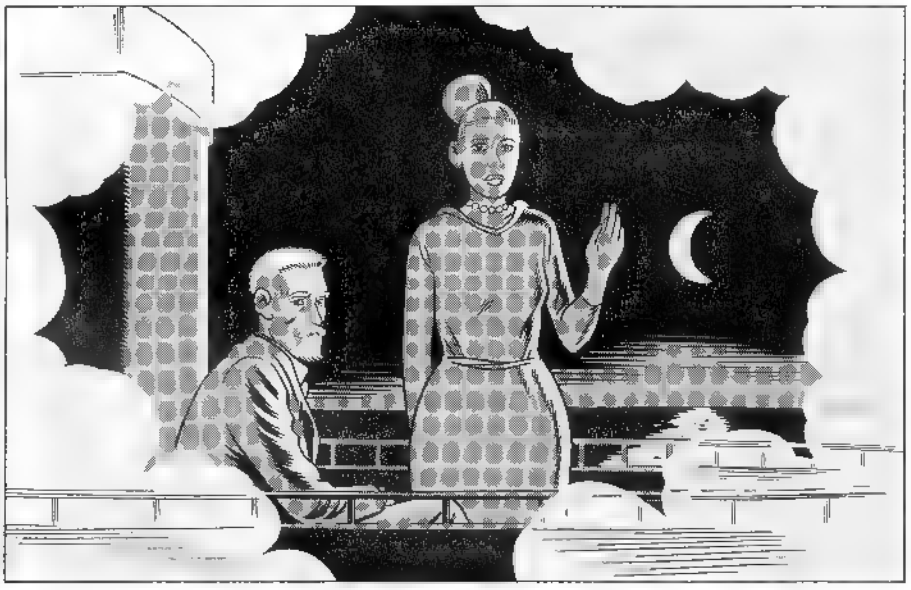




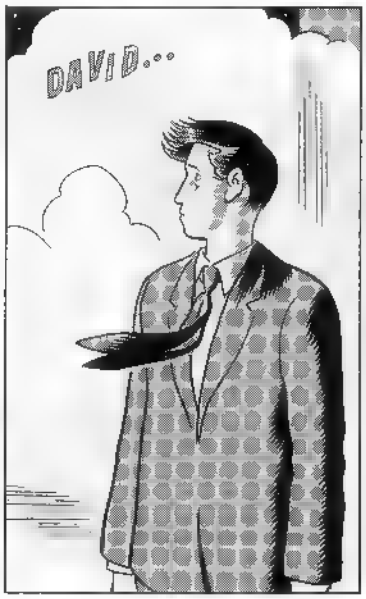
SUDDENLY, IT COMES TO ME. DO YOU KNOW WHO SHE IS? DO YOU REMEMBER THE YOUNG ACTRESS FROM THE NIGHT OF 2/23/98? SUCH NARRATIVE SYMMETRY CANNOT BODE WELL. THIS MUST REALLY BE THE END.

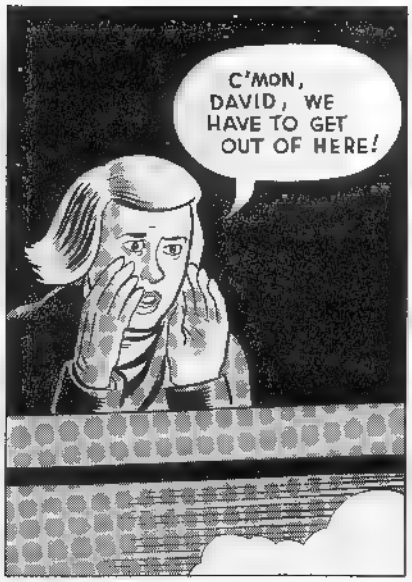
WHY DOESN'T SHE ANSWER? HOW CAN SHE LEAVE ME ALL ALONE LIKE THIS?
HA
JUDY?
SHOULD I LET PAUL KILL ME? NOT THAT I HAVE A CHOICE, NECESSARILY... I COULD TRY TO KILL HIM I SUPPOSE BUT WHY?
I'VE NEVER HURT ANYBODY IN MY WHOLE LIFE. AT LEAST I CAN SAY THAT.
SHE DOESN'T WANT YOU OR YOUR STUPID NECKLACE!!
I SEE NOW THAT THE ONLY DIGNITY LEFT TO ME IS IN THE CHOOSING OF MY OWN FINALE.
GO ON, BEAT IT!
I MUST THWART WHATEVER ACTION-PACKED CLIMAX THE CREATOR HAS IN STORE FOR ME AND GO OUT ON MY OWN TERMS.
GET OUTTA HERE!
GO ON, THE COPS ARE ON THEIR WAY!
NEXT TIME, YOU'RE DEAD!
LET HIM GO...
HAPPY NEW YEAR!



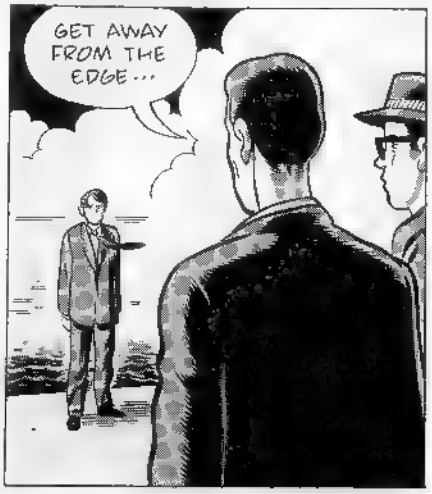


DAVID...

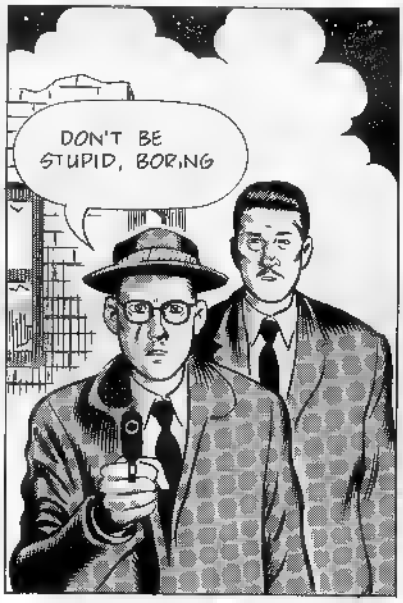

DAVID...



I NEVER DID PUT TOGETHER A STORY OUT OF THOSE YELLOW STREAK PANELS... NOTHING THAT I WAS HAPPY WITH ANYWAY...

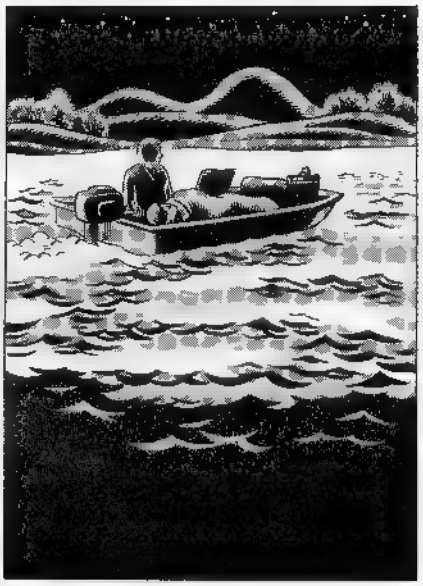


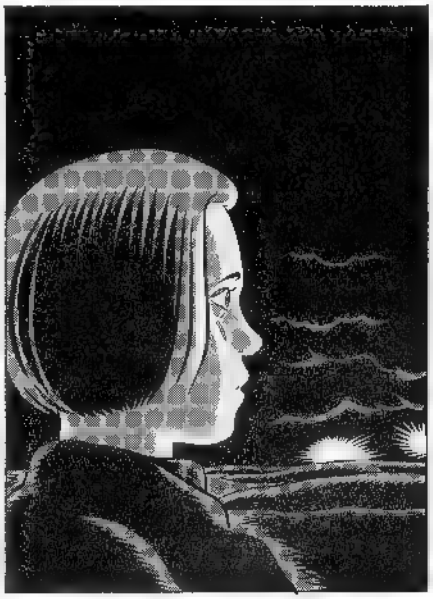
FOR ONE THING, I COULD NEVER COME UP WITH THE RIGHT ENDING. MY FATHER DIDN'T GIVE ME MUCH TO WORK WITH (OTHER THAN "TO BE CONTINUED...").



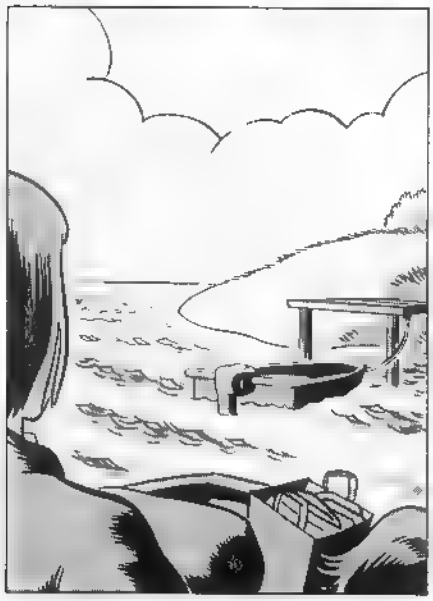
I OPEN MY EYES EXPECTING ETERNAL PEACE, AND AM INSTEAD FACED WITH THE LURID RESULTS OF DOT'S SURPRISING MARKSMANSHIP...

THIS IS FOLLOWED IMMEDIATELY BY THE FAMILIAR IMPACT OF A BULLET STRIKING MY FOREHEAD (THIS TIME, THANKFULLY, ONLY A GLANCING BLOW) AND THE ONSET OF TEMPORARY UNCONSCIOUSNESS.





EXCEPT FOR A FEW ILLUMINATED MOMENTS, I DON'T REMEMBER MUCH ABOUT OUR TRIP, WHICH, ACCORDING TO DOT, WAS AN ADVENTURE IN ITSELF, LASTING FIFTEEN MISERABLE HOURS AND INVOLVING SOME PERILOUS NAVIGATIONAL CHOICES.

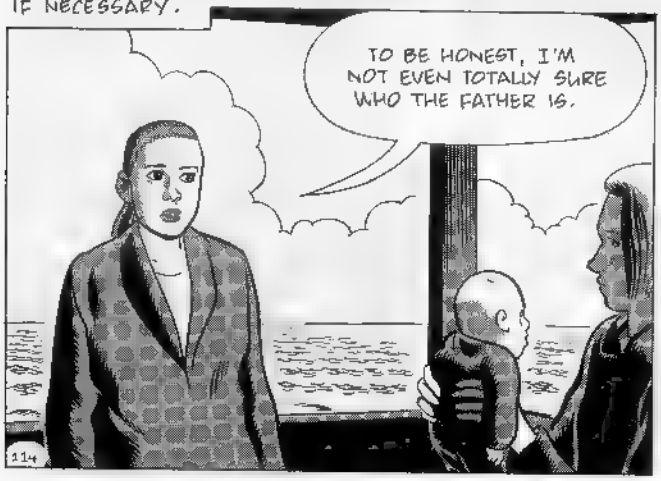


DOT IS CONVINCED THAT THE PIGS HAVE BEATEN US HERE, AND LOADS HER GUN FOR A FINAL BLOODBATH.

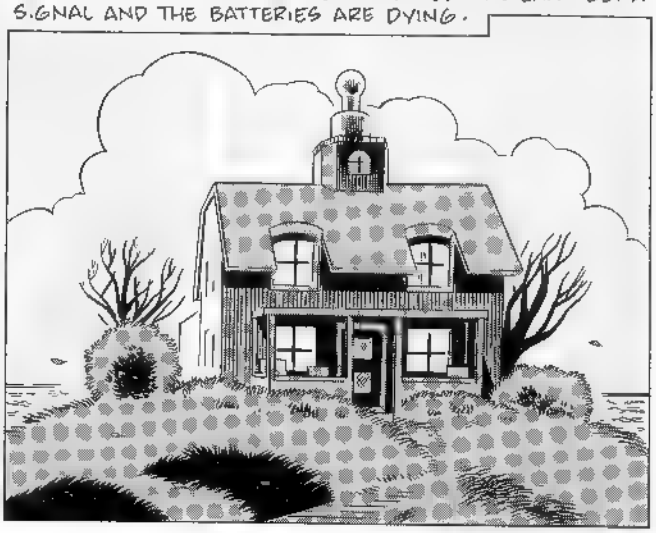
I FEAR THE WORST. WHAT IF MY MOTHER AND MANFRED HAVE RETURNED TO THE SCENE OF THE CRIME?

PAMELA HAS BEEN THERE SINCE THE 27TH, "JUST IN CASE THE TERRORISTS COME BACK." SHE SAYS. EVERYONE HAD PREDICTED AN ATTACK ON NEW YEAR'S EVE (WHICH IS TODAY. NOW THAT I THINK ABOUT IT) BUT DOT AND I HAVE BEEN TOO BUSY TO GIVE IT MUCH THOUGHT.

"I'M NOT TAKING ANY CHANCES WITH HIM (GESTURES TOWARD BABY) IN THE PICTURE," SAYS PAMELA, THOUGH I SUSPECT SHE HAS A LOT TO GET AWAY FROM.. SHE HAS ENOUGH DRY FOOD FOR SIX MONTHS AND PLANS TO START A VEGETABLE GARDEN IN THE SPRING, IF NECESSARY.

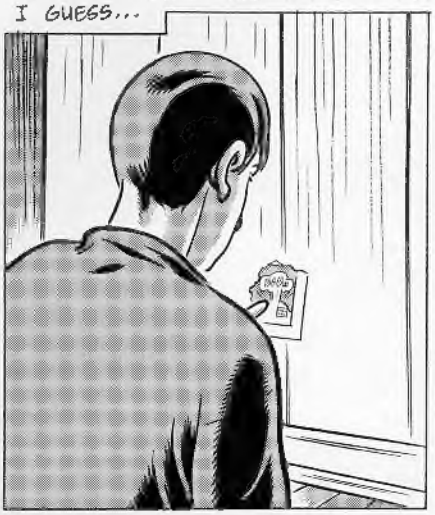


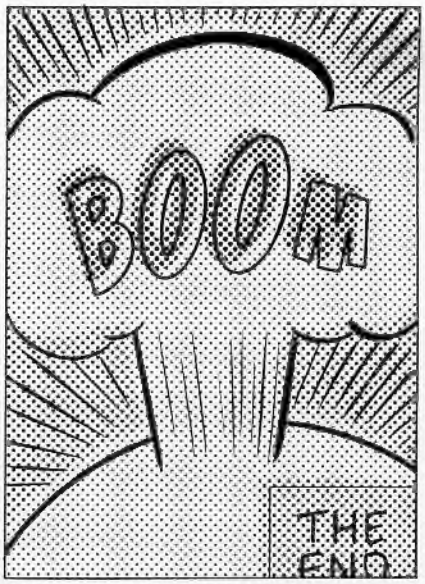
A WEEK GOES BY AND THERE'S STILL NO SIGN OF THE POLICE. MAYBE SOMETHING REALLY HAPPENED THIS TIME. PAMELA HAS A LITTLE RADIO BUT WE CAN'T GET A SIGNAL AND THE BATTERIES ARE DYING.



ON JANUARY 9TH, I SPOT THE EDGE OF A FUGITIVE YELLOW STREAK PANEL UNDER THE FLOOR MOLDING IN MY ROOM.

IT'S ONE I DON'T REMEMBER EVER HAVING SEEN BEFORE. MY FATHER WASN'T MUCH FOR ENDINGS, I GUESS...





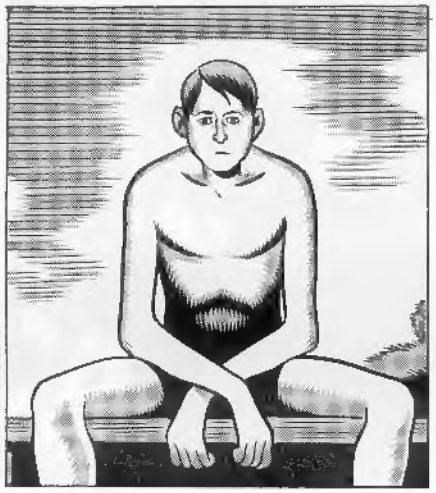
ON JANUARY 26TH, AFTER A PERIOD OF INCREASING REMORSE, DOT FINALLY BREAKS DOWN. "WHAT HAVE I DONE?" SHE SAYS, "I'M A MONSTER!"

SHE TELLS PAMELA THE WHOLE HORRIBLE STORY, ABOUT WHICH MY COUSIN REMARKS, "WHEN YOU FIND A GOOD MAN, YOU HAVE TO DO WHATEVER YOU CAN TO PROTECT HIM."

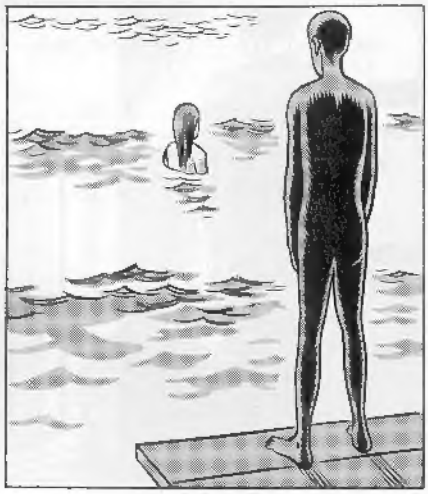
DOT AGREES, AND TRIES TO EXPLAIN TO HER THE COMPLEX MECHANICS OF OUR RELATIONSHIP. I AM ACROSS THE ROOM, JUST OUT OF EARSHOT, STRAINING TO HEAR WHAT THEY SAY. THEY BEGIN LAUGHING UNCONTROLLABLY. PAMELA SMILES AT ME OVER HER SHOULDER.

AS THE WEEKS PASS, DOT GROWS MORE AND MORE ATTACHED TO THE BABY. A STRANGER, AT THIS POINT, WOULD PROBABLY TAKE HER FOR THE MOTHER.

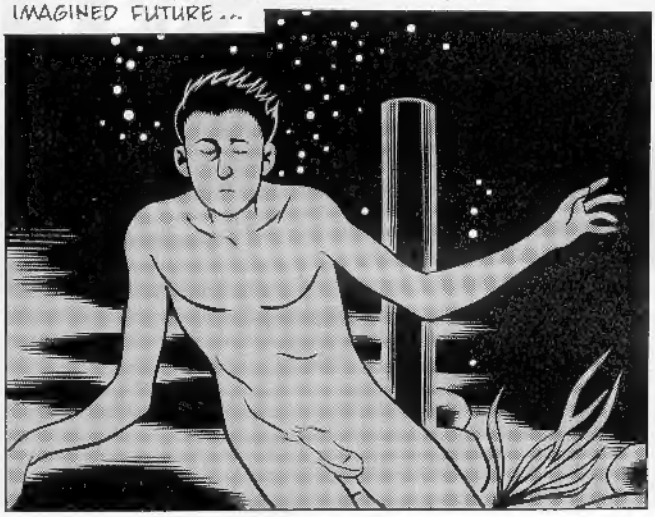
AS OF TODAY, WE'VE BEEN HERE FOR FOUR-AND-A-HALF MONTHS AND SUICIDE IS THE FARTHEST THING FROM MY THOUGHTS.



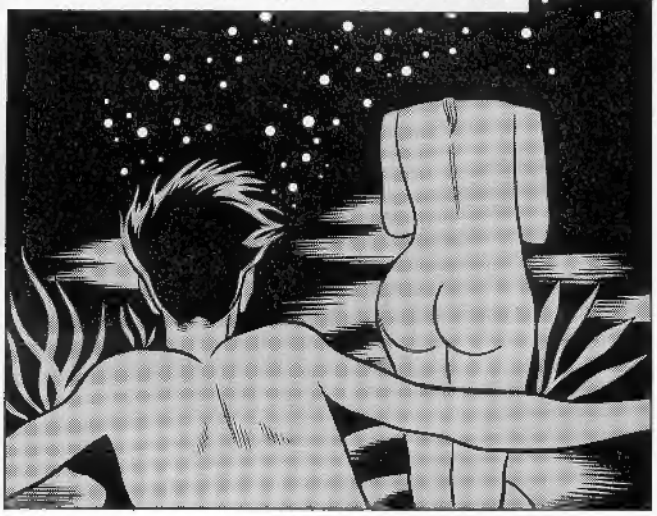
WE'VE STOPPED WORRYING ABOUT THE POLICE, OR EVEN THE CLOUD OF POISONOUS MICROBES THAT IS SURELY WAFTING TOWARD US.



WE'VE BEEN TRYING TO LIVE PEACEFULLY, WITHOUT REGRET OR FOREBODING, MINDFUL OF A RETURN TO LIVING IN THE PRESENT RATHER THAN FOR AN IMAGINED FUTURE...

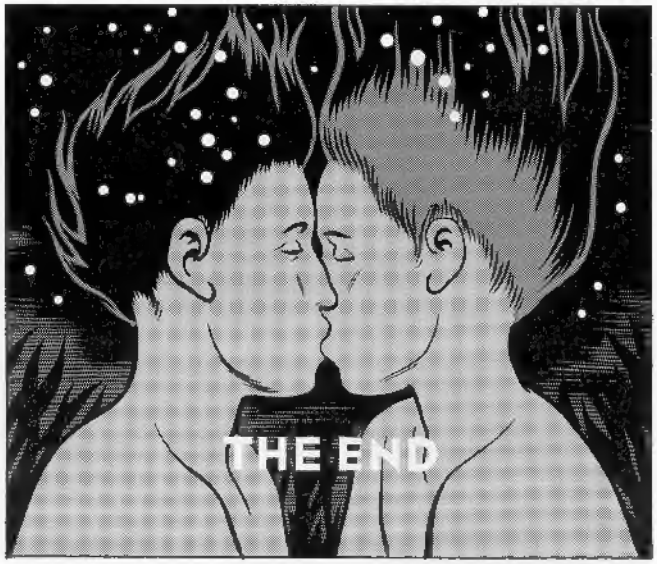


WE GRACIOUSLY ACCEPT THIS HAPPY ENDING, AND RECOGNIZE IT AS SUCH: A SUSPENDED POCKET OF STILLNESS BETWEEN CLIMAX AND OBLIVION.



AFTER ALL, WHAT BETTER COULD WE HOPE FOR THAN A FEW PERFECT WEEKS BEFORE THE CURTAIN FALLS?

BELIEVE ME, I'M THANKFUL FOR EVERY SECOND.



FEATURING	(IN ORDER OF APPEARANCE)
NARRATOR	DAVID BORING
YOUNG ACTRESS	EMILY RANSOM
DAVID'S BEST FRIEND	DOT PAAR
BACKGROUND MAN	MR. BEARD
BACKGROUND WOMAN	MRS. BEARD
DAVID'S OTHER FRIEND	WHITEY WHITMAN
DOT'S DATE	GINGER FERGUSON
WHITEY'S DATE	CARLA S.
DAVID'S DATE	STEPHANIE B.
POLICE DETECTIVE	LT. ANEMONE
VAN DRIVER	BEN SOO
FIRST PASSENGER	PROF. JAFFE
SECOND PASSENGER	WANDA KRAML
PASTOR	PASTOR G. KNOOP
WHITEY'S COUSIN	DAGMAR HICKMAN
WHITEY'S STEPBROTHER	WARREN PAPPAS
MR. PIZZA EMPLOYEE	TREY BRAUN
DAVID'S MOTHER	MRS. BORING
STRANGE VISITOR	FERDINAND KARKES
MR. BEARD'S FRIEND	GLADYS X.
DAVE'S COUNTERMAN	DAVE JR.
COMPUTER JERK	ROB HILLOCKS
BARTENDER	BRAD CANDELARIA
GINGER'S BOYFRIEND	JEFF DRAKE
OTHER PROFESSORS	PROF. EDWARDS
	PROF. FAGG
	PROF. NUGENT
EERIE BOY	HIMSELF
GIRL IN WATER	PAMELA BROWN
CARETAKER	MR. HULLIGAN
DAVID'S SECOND COUSIN	HELEN CAPON
MRS. CAPON'S DAUGHTER	IRIS ROLAND
IRIS'S HUSBAND	MANFRED ROLAND
DAVID'S GREAT-UNCLE	AUGUST BROWN
RESCUER	KANDI LUTZ
RESCUER'S MOTHER	JANET LUTZ
DAVID'S GIRLFRIEND	NAOMI SORENSEN
COMIC DEALER	ROMAN JANACEK
COMICS EXPERT	GERRY BISHOFF
KARKES'S WIFE	MRS. KARKES
PRIVATE INVESTIGATOR	PURCELL HOWE
WANDA'S SISTER	JUDY LOWENSTEIN
FISHERMEN	CARL BECKMAN
	WILDER THORNE
FBI AGENT	ROY SMITH
JUDY'S HUSBAND	PAUL LOWENSTEIN
GIRL IN BAR	BARBARA HOPPER-STANGL
TICKET SCALPER	JACK DAHLMEYER
UNCLE SAM	FONTAINE FINNEGAN
STRAW HAT DANCER	CAL CALLISON
MC	DEAN LACEY
BOUNCERS	TUG TIMLIN
	TODD ZIMMER
PAMELA'S BABY	BABY BROWN
FEATURED EXTRAS	JANE ALLEN
	B.B. BOGLE
	SANDRA BUNCE
	D.G. CLOWES
	PARKER COLE
	JACK DAVIS
	LOUIS GOTTSCHALK
	POPEYE GROSSMAN
	PEPPER LACEY
	KIM LEE
	BRUCE MALM
	TROY MALM
	LUDWIG NELSON
	DENVER POLK JR.
	DOLORES POTTS
	KEN RUSK
	IRA SCHMERDEKNECHT
	DUANE SIKKENGA
	DOUG SIKKENGA
	EMILY SWAN
	SUMMER TUFTS
	BRUCE T. WAYNE
	C. C. WRIGHT
	GALE YEOMAN
	CON ZEIGLER

EIGHTBALL

PREVIOUSLY...

IN ISSUE #19 WE MET **DAVID** AND HIS ROOMMATE **DOT**. WE LEARNED THAT DAVID'S FATHER WAS A CARTOONIST WHO HAD ONCE DRAWN A COMIC BOOK CALLED **THE YELLOW STREAK AND FRIENDS ANNUAL**. WE SAW DAVID'S ROMANCE WITH MYSTERIOUS CO-ED **WANDA KRAMI**, BLOSSOM, ONLY TO END ABRUPTLY AFTER THEIR FIRST SEXUAL ENCOUNTER. WE THEN WATCHED IN HORROR AS DAVID WAS SHOT IN THE HEAD BY AN UNKNOWN ASSAILANT. IN ISSUE #20, WE WERE RELIEVED TO LEARN THAT DAVID WAS ALIVE, AND JOINED HIM AS HE TRAVELLED WITH HIS **MOTHER** AND DOT TO **HULLIGAN'S WHARF**, A FAMILY-OWNED ISLAND RETREAT. THERE WE MET SEVERAL MEMBERS OF DAVID'S EXTENDED FAMILY, LEARNED OF A POSSIBLE TERRORIST ATTACK BACK HOME, AND WATCHED AS FAMILY TENSIONS LED TO BETRAYAL, ABANDONMENT AND MURDER. WHEN WE LAST SAW HIM, DAVID HAD JUST SET SAIL, ALONG WITH **HULLIGAN THE CARPENTER**, IN A HOMEMADE RAFT FOR THE MAINLAND...

FOR SALE --BOOKS AND COMICS BY

REKNOWNED CARTOONIST DANIEL CLOWES. CARICATURE IS A 96-PAGE COLLECTION OF 9 SHORT STORIES. THIS HANDSOME HARDCOVER VOLUME IS PRICED AT $32. GHOST WORLD, OUR BEST-SELLING NUMBER, CAN BE YOURS FOR ONLY $11. THE 48-PAGE PUSSEY IS AVAILABLE IN BOTH SOFTCOVER ($11.) AND HARDCOVER ($32.) EDITIONS. THE OFFICIAL LLOYD LLEWELLYN COLLECTION, OUR SENIOR TITLE, SELLS AT $13. AND RUNS 96 PAGES. LIKE A VELVET GLOVE CAST IN IRON, A DELUXE HARDCOVER, CAN BE HAD FOR SOLD OUT. LOUT RAMPAGE! WILL SOON BE OUT OF PRINT FOREVER AND HALF OF ITS 96 PAGES WILL BE PERMANENTLY DELETED. ONLY $17. VARIOUS ISSUES OF EIGHTBALL ARE STILL AVAILABLE. #'S 2,4,7,8,11,14 AND 15 ARE $3. 16,17,18 & 19 ARE $4. #20 IS $5. ALL PRICES INCLUDE POSTAGE. TO ORDER, CALL 1-800-657-1100 OR VISIT WWW.FANTAGRAPHICS.COM ON YOUR COMPUTER.

LETTERS

WRITE TO: EIGHTBALL
2140 SHATTUCK AVE.
SUITE #2107
BERKELEY, CA
94704

THIS ISSUE'S FEATURED CORRESPONDENT
B.N. DUNCAN
OF CALIFORNIA, USA.

APRIL 12

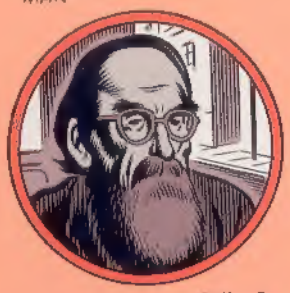
EIGHTBALL #20 WITH "HULLIGAN'S WHARF" IS TREMENDOUS! RIGHT OFF WITH THE FRONT COVER, YOU HAVE MORE POWER OF EXPRESSION THAN EVER BEFORE! THAT SPECIAL STARKNESS! THAT EXCRUCIATING STARKNESS!

I HATE THAT MOTHER OF DAVID BORING! SHE SHOULD RECEIVE MANY HARD BEATINGS WITHIN AN INCH OF HER LIFE! SO SHE DOESN'T LIKE FLESHLY SEX -- SHE SHOULD BE FUCKED WITH A STREET DRILL! I MYSELF HAD A CASTRATING, SLIMY, HYPOCRITICAL DICTATOR-MOTHER WHO WAS ALWAYS AGAINST ME.

MAY 23

I'M GLAD THAT LETTER OF MINE IS HELPFUL. IT'S SO EASY TO LIVE IN TOO MUCH ISOLATION.

TWO OF MY FAVORITE CARTOONISTS ARE YOU AND R. CRUMB, ECTOMORPHS WHO DO A LOT TO BRING ATTENTION TO THE OVER-SENSITIVE, CEREBROTONIC TYPE OF MAN. SO MUCH OF OUR SOCIETY IS AGAINST THAT TYPE OF MAN!



JULY 8

I DON'T KNOW IF I CAN STAND THE FINAL INSTALLMENT OF DAVID BORING. I HAVE A FEELING THAT SOMETHING REALLY TERRIBLE IS GOING TO HAPPEN. WHAT WILL HAPPEN TO DAVID? HE'S A THIN-SKINNED, FRAIL INTROVERT. HE'S NOT SUITED FOR THIS ROUGH-AND-TUMBLE WORLD.

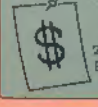
AUGUST 10

THE SUSPENSE REALLY GETS TO ME. I KNOW THAT SOMETHING WILL HAPPEN IN THE FINAL DAVID BORING THAT WILL REALLY UPSET ME. I'M A BIT SCARED.

COULD IT TURN OUT TO BE A TALE OF SALVATION? OR SALVATION AND DAMNATION COMBINED? WILL DAVID FIND A CREATIVE SPIRIT? COULD YOU IN SOME WAY BE TELLING ABOUT YOURSELF AS A MAN WHO FINDS HIS OWN KIND OF POWER?

ORIGINAL ART

BY DANIEL CLOWES, FROM EIGHTBALL AND ELSEWHERE.



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